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Specimens

OF

THE GREEK AND ROMAN POETS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

SPECIMENS

OF THE

Classic Poets,

IN A CHRONOLOGICAL SERIES

FROM

HOMER TO TRYPHIODORUS,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE,

And illustrated with

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES.

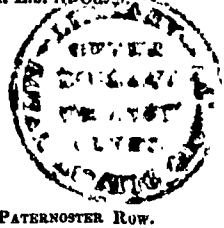
81537

BY

CHARLES ABRAHAM ELTON,

AUTHOR OF A TRANSLATION OF HESIOD.

Non si priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent.
Ceæque, et Alcæi minaces
Stesichorique graves Camœnæ.
Hor. Lib. iv. Od. 9.



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Lucan.

LUCAN.

Aft. Ch. 39.

PHARSALIA.

ENGLISH TRANSLATORS: MAY, ROWE.

Marcus Annæus Lucanus was born at Corduba now Cordova, in Spain, which was also the birth-place of Seneca, the philosopher, and of Seneca, the tragic poet. He was the son of Annæus Mela, a Roman knight, brother of Seneca, the stoic philosopher; and of Caia Acilia, daughter of the orator Acilius Lucanus. Lucan was brought to Rome when an infant: he was educated there, under the most distinguished professors of rhetoric and philosophy. He was

raised to the office of Questor by Nero, who had been his uncle's pupil. Lucan, it is said, drew upon him the Emperor's resentment, by disputing with him the prize of poetry in Pompey's amphitheatre; when Nero's Niobe was judged inferior to the Orpheus of Lucan, a poem now lost; and he was, in consequence, interdicted from reciting in public. Lucan was afterwards implicated in Piso's conspiracy; and we are told by Tacitus that, at the sight of the instruments of torture, he was led to impeach his own mother. Acilia however was overlooked by Nero, glutted as he was by the varieties of death and torment inflicted on his victims; but the pusillanimous baseness imputed to Lucan availed him nothing; and he then prepared himself to die, with the courage and calmness of a philosophic character. He had his veins opened in a hot bath, and bled to death; repeating, while he expired, some verses from the third book of his Pharsalia, descriptive of a man cut in two by a grappling-hook in a sea-fight:

Asunder torn, not from a single wound
The blood wells slowly forth; but, pour'd at once,
Gushes from all the lacerated veins.
O'er every limb strays warm the crimson life;
The waters intercept it, as it flows;
Nor e'er, from dying man, the vital stream
Through such capacious channels ebbed away.

Lucan died at the age of twenty-seven; and left his poem unfinished. It was revised and published by his wife Polla Argentaria, a lady praised by Statius for her accomplishments and ingenuous manners. It is singular, that the excellent translation of the Pharsalia, by Rowe, should have been produced to the world precisely under the same circumstances as the original. It was a posthumous work, and it was published by his widow.

Virgil is superior to Lucan in taste, in propriety of thought, elegance of diction, and flowing harmony of numbers; but in originality of genius, in weight of sentiment, in ardour of imagination, and in the strong and masterly display of character, Lucan excells Virgil. The cant of criticism has objected to Lucan, that he does

not employ the machinery of Gods and Goddesses, and that he comes under the class of historian or orator,.. rather than of poet. These distinctions are mere refinements. Both history and oratory may legitimately enter into epic poetry; but a poet neither declaims, nor narrates, like an orator or historian; and it should be shown that Lucan has not that higher excitement of fancy and passion which characterizes the poet. As to the heathen machinery, we are not to be guided by forms and precedents, but by a rational view of the purposes of poetry, and by common sense. It is admitted, indeed, that Lucan showed his judgment in excluding the personal agency of Gods from a story of recent events; but this is insisted upon as an argument, that he should not have treated of recent events at all. This is indeed attaching a wonderful importance to a God and a Goddess. But the primary objects of epic poetry are the display of great passions, and the enforcement of momentous political, or moral, or religious truths; and the poet is to consider by what means these objects may best be

effected. Whatever has lost its hold on the human mind should without hesitation be rejected, however recommended by the example and success of former poets, who used it under different circumstances. The fancy lends itself to the old Homeric mythology, as appropriate to his age. His Gods and Goddesses were as much the subjects of popular belief as the fairies of Wales. But the quarrels of Jupiter and Juno, and the flights of Mercury, pall upon the attention, when repeated for the thousandth time. The change of manners is one great cause of this. In the time of Virgil, the notion of every human action being impelled by some superior over-ruling power, had no longer any place in the opinions of men; and the interference of his Deities usually appears unnatural and unnecessary, and therefore cold and insipid. His Sibyll is impressive, because a real personage. This argument is not alone applicable to the heathen machinery. Milton chose a subject above common nature, and necessarily connected with the invisible world; and the imagination easily follows where he

leads: but Tasso, in intermixing angels and devils with the Saracens and Crusaders, has produced only burlesque. He succeeds only in his enchantments, which are in unison with the tone of opinion in the Saracenic age. Generally speaking, the same consciousness, that human actions are not immediately operated upon by supernatural controul, would equally weaken the effect of any machinery whatever. How far this notion of epic machinery may spoil a good poem, will appear in the instance of the Henriade, which is very far from being despicable, either in force of character, or in sublimity of conception: witness the characters of Coligny, and of Catherine de Medicis, and the passage of Henry the Great in a vision to the other world; but the mythological Love plays his part with St. Louis, in a poem of that author, who saw clearly enough the faulty taste of Camoens, in associating Bacchus with the Virgin Mary; and the personifications of Discord, Policy, and other abstractions, freeze the effect of every thing. Yet Voltaire thought that he had laid the corner-stone of modern ma-

chinery, and secured to himself the glory of the highest epic invention. Lucan would have made similar blunders, had he fettered himself with the pedantic rules of a system. Yet he has neglected no occasion of heightening the solemnity of his poem, by such preternatural incidents as suited the temper of the times. Erictho and her sorceries might have roused the emulation of Dante; and "The Sacred Wood" suggested to Tasso the idea of his "Enchanted Forest."

Had Lucan lived to revise his poem gradually, by the frequent exercise of a ripening judgment, he would probably have retrenched much of its ambition of grandeur; and repressed the occasional bloated extravagance of thought and diction. He is too fond of glitter and antithesis; his sublimity soars into bombast; and his descriptions are sometimes overcharged and over-coloured, and want the sober reality of truth. But these are the faults of genius; and they, who remark the contagious fervour and energy of his manner; the dignity of his moral conceptions; the strong interest of his characters;

and the generous spirit of liberty that breathes through his poem, will be little disposed to concur with the supercilious censurers of Corneille; who, in seeking for a dramatic model, preferred Lucan to Virgil.

LUCAN.

STATE OF ROME,

AND CHARACTERS OF POMPEY AND CÆSAR.

My spirit prompts me to unfold the springs
Of these so dread events: a task immense
Opens before me. By what causes urged
The people madden'd into war, and peace
Was shaken from the world; the course of Fates
Malignant, and the footing frail of power
In its high places; empire headlong push'd
By its unwieldy weight; and Rome oppress'd
With her own greatness. Thus, when this huge earth,
Unhinged, shall tremble, and her final hour
Close the long ages of successive time,
At once the frame of matter shall relapse
In ancient chaos; planets hurtling shock,
And fiery stars plunge headlong in the sea;
The earth no longer stretch its bounding shores,

But shake the waters forth; the moon disdain
Along her winding orbit to direct
Her sloping chariot, but in western skies
Shall front the sun, and half usurp the day;
The whole machine, its elemental laws
Disturb'd, shall in disjointed ruin yawn,
And reel to dissolution. Greatness thus
Falls inward on itself. The Gods forbade
The spread of prosperous glory, and affix'd
This fatal limit. Fortune aids not now
The hate of nations, enviously combined
Against the mistress of the earth and main:
Thou art, thyself, the cause, unhappy Rome!
The common portion of a triple power.
Three lords divide thy rule; but never yet
A reigning multitude had grasp'd the rod.
Oh ill allied! and blind with lust of sway!
Why mix your strength, and hold the universe
Suspended in the balance? while the sea
Floats upon earth, and buoyant earth on air;
While in long labours rolls the solar orb;
While night, along the signs that gird the sky,
Treads on the track of day; so long, in vain,

Would faith be sought in partnership of rule.
All power disdains associates. Nor, for this,
Let other nations urge your slow belief,
Nor yet explore these instances of Fate
With search remote. Behold! our infant walls
Reek'd with a brother's blood: nor then was earth,
Or sea, the price of this unnatural rage:
The mean asylum of a vagrant crowd
Moved the fraternal strife. Short time remain'd
This inharmonious concord; this fair show
Of an unwilling peace. Between the chiefs,
Crassus alone, with interposed delay,
Repell'd the future war. As, in the midst,
The severing isthmus cuts the waves, and bars
The double seas, that heave in vain to rush
Upon each other; should the land recede,
Th' Ionian main would on th' Ægean burst
With mingling shock of waters; so, when fell
Unhappy Crassus; when the man, who sheathed
Those savage swords, stain'd with his piteous blood
Assyrian Carrhæ's walls, this Roman loss
On Parthian plains let loose the rage of Rome,
Sons of Arsaces! on that day was struck

A blow beyond your hopes; and at your hands,
The vanquish'd then received a civil war.
The sword divides the realm. The swelling state
Of this so powerful people, grasping earth,
And every sea, the universe itself,
Seem'd a scant stage for two ambitious men.
Cut sudden off by Fate's remorseless hand,
Julia the infant pledge of kindred blood
Bore with her to the grave; and quench'd the light
Of child-birth tapers, that ill-omen'd shone
Around her chamber, with funereal gleam.
Oh! had the Destinies allow'd thee still
To tarry in the open light of Heaven,
Thy soft embraces had alone retain'd
A husband and a father: thou alone
Couldst wrest the sword from their infuriate grasp,
And knit their weapon'd hands: as, in the midst,
The Sabine women rush'd, and join'd in peace
Their husbands and their sires. Thy death dissolv'd
The compact, and released the rival chiefs
To wage permitted war. The jealous pride
Of equal valour stung them into wrath.
Thou, Pompey! fear'st lest new exploits eclipse

Thy ancient triumphs; lest the vanquish'd Gauls
Blast thy piratic laurels. Thee a course
Of labours, and experience of renown,
And a proud fortune, which impatient spurns
A secondary rank, arouse to arms.
Nor Cæsar can to aught superior bow,
Nor Pompey bear an equal. But to know
Which in the juster quarrel drew the sword,
Exceeds our power. With either party sides
A mighty judge. Heaven owns the conquering cause,
Cato the vanquish'd. Not on equal terms
Close the great rivals in the lists of war.
The one declines into the vale of life:
Calm in the habits of the gown, he now
Had half unlearn'd the chieftain's art, more apt
To court the multitude for noisy fame,
And deal his liberal largess to the crowd;
Hang on the popular breath, and joy to hear,
Round his own theatre, the rising shout
Applaud his entrance. Nor with strength new nerved
Repairs his youthful vigour; but, secure

Of glory, on his former fortunes leans.
He stood, the shadow of a mighty name.
As, on some acorn-teeming plain, an oak,
Bearing aloft a people's spoils of yore,
And consecrated gifts of chieftains old,
No longer clings to vigorous roots, but stands
By its own weight made stedfast, and, in air
Spreading abroad its bare and straggling boughs,
Casts with its trunk a shadow, not with leaves;
Though, at the first rush of the eastern blast,
It nods from high, and rocks, as to its fall;
Though all around woods rise of firmer stem,
Its reverend pomp remains. But no such name
Of old renown, nor glory of the field
Was Cæsar's; but a valour that could brook
No rest: his only shame was victory won
By aught but open force; a spirit keen,
And unsubdued; at beck of sanguine hope,
Or anger, prompt to rush; and never slow,
On rash occasion's spur, to stain the sword.
Fervid to push success; adroit to seize
Th' auspicious hour of fortune; beating down
All obstacles, while pressing to the heights;

And glorying still to hew himself a path
Through havock and destruction. So, by winds
Crush'd from the clouds, the glittering lightning breaks,
With roaring of the agitated air,
And hollow crash of earth: through the clear day
It cleaves a fiery track, while, terror-struck,
The nations tremble; and their darkening eyes
Are dazzled by the crooked glare of flame;
Against its native sphere, the concave Heaven,
Rages the forky element and rends
The unresisting ether; in descent,
As in recoil, it spreads the mighty range
Of devastation; gathers in an orb
The scatter'd fires, and re-ascends in flame.

THE SACRED WOOD.

THERE stood a grove, that ne'er had felt the stroke
Of violating axe, from age to age:
Whose convex boughs, girdling the gloomy air,
O'ercanopied their cold and twilight shades,
While daily suns at distance roll'd away.
No Sylvans, Fauns, or Nymphs, the woodland Powers,
Make here their haunt; but with barbaric rites
Strange Gods are hallow'd and dread offerings laid
Upon their altars. Holy sprinklings bathe
The reddening trees, that drop with human gore:
And, if religious faith from days of old
May win belief, the birds with passing wing
Tremble to light upon those forest boughs;
The wild beasts quake to couch them in the lair.
No winds rest whispering on the high-tree tops;
And from the black o'erhanging vault of clouds,
Pale streamy lightnings straggle through the gloom.

The trees, that never to the breathing air
Are seen to wave, yet quiver with their boughs
In a mysterious horror; and, from springs
Of darkest tide, the sullen waters dash
In melancholy falls; and forms are seen
Of ghastly shapeless idols, jutting rude
From the carved trunks in uncouth imagery;
And e'en their creeping moss, and whitening hue
Of mouldering wood, appal th' astonish'd eye.
Not so we shudder at the Gods adored
By known familiar forms; but such the force
Of holy terrors, when we fear a God,
Nor know the God we fear: and fame had told,
That oft the hollow caverns of the ground
In earthquake rock'd, with mutter'd bellowings deep:
Fallen yew-trees rose erect; the forest glared
Without a flame; and coiling dragons twined
Their slippery clasps around the gnarled oaks.
The people, in their worship, draw not nigh,
But to their Gods resign that solitude,
When shines the sun in mid-day Heaven, or nigh
With dark inwraps the sky. The priest himself

Shudders, approaching; lest his glance descry
The unseen Power, the Dæmon of the wood.
Against this forest Cæsar bade them lift
The levelling axe. It grew hard by the works,
Which the besiegers raised; and stood untouch'd
In former wars, though all the mountains round
Were stript of all their shades. But valiant hands
Then falter'd. Such the reverend majesty
That wrapt the gloomy spot, they fear'd the axe,
That struck those hallow'd trees, would from the stroke
Recoil upon themselves. When Cæsar saw
The legions lingering in perplex'd dismay,
He snatch'd and poised an axe; and dared, the first,
Mark an aerial oak-tree to its fall;
And, plunging in the violated bark
The steely edge, exclaim'd, "Lest any doubt
To fell the grove, the sacrilege be mine."
The soldiery obey'd: not then secure,
Or freed from fears; but weighing in their thoughts
The wrath of Cæsar 'gainst the wrath of Heaven.
Then stoop'd the lofty elms; the knotted oaks,

And beech-trees of Dodona prostrate bow'd;
And watery alders, and dark cypress-trees
That shade the noble herse, then first stood bare
Of branches, and let in the flash of day.
The forest, bending to the stroke, yet hung
Suspended in its fall, and stood self-prop'd
By multitudinous stems. At this drear scene
Of impious waste the Gaulic people groan'd:
But the beleaguer'd host, that watchful stood
On high Massilia's towers, beheld the deed
Exulting. Who would deem th' insulted Gods
Indifferent to revenge? But Fortune aids
The guilty, and the anger of the Heavens
Lights only on the wretched. When, at length,
Through the wide wood enough had strew'd the ground,
They search the fields, and bear the cars away.
The husbandmen behold their labouring steers
Torn from the crooked plough, and weep their fields
Barren in rest, and mourn the blasted year.

CÆSAR AND HIS ARMY

ON THE PLAINS OF PHARSALIA.

THEY found indeed a world's collected spoils;
Ingots of ponderous ore amass'd to feed
The charges of the war. Yet, could not this
Suffice to minds that coveted the realm.
All that th' Iberian digs, and all the gold
That Tagus casts ashore; and those rich grains
Cull'd by the Arimaspian on the ridge
Of sandy hills, would seem, within their grasp,
A price too mean for their unnatural guilt.
The conquerors self-assured that they should stand
On the Tarpeian citadel, whose hopes
The promise fired of universal Rome
A spoil and prey, felt mock'd to seize a camp.
On the same turf, where senators had lain,
The impious herd took now their rest: the couch,
Which princes left, the ruffian soldier press'd;
And sinful they reposed them on the beds
Of fathers and of brothers. Yet their sleep
Was frantic rest; their midnight dreams were fill'd

With fury: wretched, turning in their thoughts
Thessalia's fight. Their savage guilt awakes,
Watching beside them. All the scene of arms
Still agitates their souls. Their empty hands
Grasp at the hilt, convulsive. I should deem,
The field of blood beneath them, groaning, heaved;
That noxious earth with supernatural life
Had re-inspired the dead; th' infected air
Were throng'd with rising ghosts, and th' upper world
Borrow'd its horror from the night of Hell.
For victory now exacts atoning pains
From these, the conscious victors. Slumber brings
The hiss of adders, and the glare of flames.
The phantom of the murder'd citizen
Is present in their sleep. Each pants oppress'd
Beneath the image of his haunting fear.
One sees the countenance of the old, and one
The youthful aspect. This a brother's corse
Disturbs, still bleeding ghastly in his dreams:
Another's bosom shudders at the sight
Of a slain father; and in Cæsar's breast
Mingle at once all visions of the dead.
Not otherwise, ere purified from blood

At Scythian altars, did Orestes view
The features of the Furies; nor the mind
Of Pentheus more astonish'd tumult felt;
Nor wild Agave, when her sense had fled.
Him all the swords that throng'd Pharsalia's field,
Or weapons of that future vengeful day,
When senators for freedom strike, oppress
In that night's slumber. Fiends of nether Hell
Scourge him with rods. How does the conscious mind
Afflict the punish'd criminal, when thus
Infernal scenes, and phantoms of the dead,
Are heap'd upon his rest; yet Pompey lives!—
But all these sufferings moved him not; when day
Shone clear abroad, discovering to the sight
Pharsalia's ruins: nor that spectacle
Of horror could recall his lingering eyes
From the funereal plain. He sees the brooks
With tides of blood accelerated flow;
Sees hills of dead, and carcasses that steam
Resolving in corruption, and counts o'er
The slain of Pompey. On that spot his board
Is spread with viands; whence he may descry

The upturn'd features of his prostrate foes.
He joys to see th' Emathian champaign hid;
And with his eyes explore the field, that lurks
Beneath the heaps of carnage. In that blood
He sees his fortune, and his guardian Gods;
And, in his rancorous fury, lest he lose
The show of this, his bloody theatre
Of guilt, he grudges to the wretched dead
Their funeral fires; and heaps th' Emathian plains
Upon th' infected air. The Punic chief,
Who buried slain Æmilius, and the piles
Of Cannæ's plains, with Lybian torches fired,
Persuade not Cæsar so to yield his foes
The rites of mild humanity. His rage,
Unsated with the slaughter, yet retains
The memory of their aggravated crime:—
His countrymen, and citizens of Rome.
We ask no single tombs; no separate piles;
Give the slain people one consuming blaze
Of general fire, nor let their bodies burn
Distinguish'd by their intermediate flames.
Or, if the anguish of thy daughter's spouse
Delight thee, pile the groves of Pindus high;

Build Æta's heapy woods; that Pompey's gaze
From the far sea may ken Thessalia's fires.
This rage avails thee not; for if the corse
Dissolve in its corruption, or consume
Upon the blazing pyre, imports alike.
Nature within her placid breast receives
All her creation; and the body pays
Itself the due of nature, and its end
Is self-consummated. But, Cæsar! know,
The fire, that now these lifeless bodies shuns,
Shall burn them with the melted globe of earth,
Shall burn them with the sea: one common flame
Shall snatch the world; and, in the general wreck,
The falling stars shall mix with human bones:
And thou, wherever Fate may call thy soul,
These spirits of the dead shall find thee there.
Not higher canst thou soar in air, nor dive,
In shades below, to more Elysian bowers.
Death, free from Fortune's malice, smiles secure;
And Earth embraces in her sheltering arms
Whate'er she clothed with life: the vault of Heaven
Covers the dead, defrauded of an urn.

PASSAGE OF CATO AND HIS ARMY

THROUGH THE DESERTS OF AFRIC.

THEN, on the desert's verge, he turn'd, and spake:
" Oh ye! that, following still my standards, place
Your all of safety in a generous death
Free from the tyrant's yoke, address your minds
To this great enterprise, this height of toils.
We pass to barren plains, a sun-scorch'd world;
Where, in excess, flames forth the star of day;
The springs with scanty waters ebb; and, parch'd,
The ground with slimy serpents noxious glares.
So hard the road to constituted law!
So rough the passage to the patriot love
Of our dear falling country! Yes, let those
Through middle Afric pass, and tempt with me
The trackless wild, who feel no lurking wish
To scape the peril; who despise return,
And only ask to push their onward way.
I seek not to deceive; nor would I drag,
Reluctant in my train, a vulgar throng,
Smothering ignoble terrors. They alone

With me are partners, whom the danger's self
Allures; who deem that, in their leader's sight,
To bear e'en worst afflictions, is to act
A Roman part of glory. He, that asks
A voucher for his safety, and is charm'd
By the fond sweets of life, may find at once
An easier path, and seek another lord:
While I, the foremost, tread the waste, and, first,
Plant in the sands my foot. Let the hot air
Strike first on me; the venom-swelling snake
Shoot in my path; and be your chieftain's fate
The foretaste of your perils. He may thirst,
Who sees me slake my lips; and he may pant,
Who sees me search the sheltering gloom of groves;
And he may droop, who sees his chieftain head
The bands of foot upon a lazy steed:
Or if, by outward bearing, I be known
For chief, or soldier. Pleasant to the brave
Is thirst; the heat, the serpent, and the sand,
Sweet to the soul of valour. Fortitude
Delights in hardship: Honour, then, is joy,
When great its trials; mighty like itself.
Afric alone supplies that crowd of ills,
Whence men might fly, nor feel the blush of shame."

He thus enkindles in their fearful souls
The flame of valour, and the love of toil;
And takes his way athwart the desert's bound,
Which he shall ne'er retrace. While, of himself
Secure, he braves the worst, the Lybian world
Invades his destinies, and soon shall close,
Within a narrow grave, his sacred name.

No vital temperature of air is felt;
Nor ether, with benignant influence, here
Pervades the soil. In torpid sluggishness
Of nature droops the clime, and feels no growth
Of seasons in th' inert expanse of sand.
Yet this so sluggish soil puts forth thin herbs,
Cull'd by the men of Nasamon; a race
Who, train'd to toils, in naked wildness, roam
Tracts on the ocean's edge. Their means of life
The Syrts supply; the losses of a world.
For on the sandy shores the plunderer hangs,
Initiated in wealth; though never keel
Touch that inhospitable port. The wrecks
Spread on the barren strand of Nasamon
The commerce of the globe. To this wild tract
Does Cato's hardy virtue bid his bands

Advance their standards. Unsuspicious there
Of winds, nor fearing on the solid earth
To buffet with the blast, the troops are seized
With ocean terrors; for the moving sands,
On the dry shore, are swept in wilder whirl
By violent gusts, than quicksands of the deep.
The whirlwind of the South descends on earth
With more destructive ravage, nor its force
Is broke by mountains of opposing ridge;
Nor, by a craggy soil withstood, it spends
Its cloudless whirls in air; nor yet on woods
It rushes down, and in its vortex sweeps
Th' uprooted oaks of ages, and exhausts
Its wearied fury. All is here a plain
Open and waste. The hurricane abroad
Bursts with free scope, and pours his airy rage.
Th' impetuous gust in spiral-eddying wreaths
Whirls the dry dust, and lifts a cloud of sand,
Cloud without shower. The plains are swept aloft,
And hang in air, suspended without fall:
While Nasamon beholds its wretched realms,
And shatter'd cabins, wandering on the winds.
Snatch'd from the reedy huts of Garamas,

* * *

The roofs fly upward. Not to greater height
The hurrying flame its scatter'd fragments wafts.
High as the smoke of conflagration soars,
And blots the light of day, so rolls the dust
Of whirlwind sand, and fills the darken'd air.
Then too, more vehement than wont, the drift
Bears on the Roman bands. The soldier seeks
In vain his footing, and unstable reels:
The sands he treads from underneath his feet
Are snatch'd, and whirl'd away. If firm the frame
Of Afric, and of hard compacted weight;
If her loose soil were rock, and scoop'd in caves,
Where the pent blast might with resistance strive,
Earth would itself be shook, and the round globe
Thrust from its seat. But, lightly lifted, float
The changing sands; acquire a permanence
From never-resting motion, and endure
By yielding to the shock: the depth of earth
Stands, while the surface flies. The sudden gust
Whirls with impetuous stroke the helms, and shields,
And spears of warriors; and, unceasingly,
Hurries along the void immense of heaven.

Perchance, to some far-distant region borne,
The flight of weapons fell, and men conceived
A prodigy; the trembling nations gazed
At armour, drop'd from heaven, and deem'd those swords
Snatch'd by the whirlwind from a human grasp,
Were by the angry Gods sent down to earth.
To Numa thus, the sacrificing king,
Fell the curved shields, which, on their shoulders hung,
The chosen band in Salian dances shake;
And haply then, the whirlwinds of the North
Had spoil'd some distant tribes, and borne through air
The sacred shields. While thus the eddy blast
Swept o'er the world of sand, the soldiery
Stoop'd prostrate; fearing to be snatch'd in air,
Wrap'd close their mantles, or their grappling hands
Plunged in the soil; nor, by their weight alone,
But by convulsive strength they press'd the ground.
Nor so, immoveable: th' o'er-rushing wind
Heap'd high the sands, and buried them in earth.
Scarce could the struggling soldier lift his limbs,
But clung within th' accumulated dust.

The drifted mound, enormous, binds them in,
And, motionless, they see the rising earth
Enclose them, where they stand. Upon its blast
The whirlwind scatter'd stones, from crashing walls
Rent, and to distant space cast wide in air,
With wonderous chance of havoc: they beheld
The ruins of invisible abodes:
And now all track is whelm'd from sight; nor aught
Marks their land-course, save, as in middle sea,
The stellar fires of ether. By the stars
They trace their way: though not th' horizon's line,
That skirts the Lybian tract, gives each known star
To their exploring gaze; for many now
Sinks shrouded by the shelving bend of earth.

But when the heat had clear'd the troubled air,
Swept by the cloudy whirlwind, and the day
Flamed forth, the sweat flow'd down from all their limbs:
Their lips were parch'd with thirst. At length a spring,
Of scant and niggard rill, is seen afar.
A soldier snatch'd the oozing wave, scarce drain'd
From choking sand, and pour'd the filter'd drops
In the broad concave of his helm; then stretch'd

His arm, and to their chieftain raised the draught.
The jaws of all were clogg'd with smearing dust:
Their chief, who held these droppings of a rill,
Was view'd with envy. "Soldier!" Cato cried,
"Think'st thou that I alone, of all these bands,
Am recreant and degenerate? seems thy chief
So soft of nature, fainting at the stroke
Of the first heat? How far more worthy he
To feel th' inflicted sun, who singly drinks,
While a whole people thirst!" Indignant then
He dash'd the helmet down; and so sufficed
The thirsting thousands with the squander'd wave.

They reach'd a fane, in tracts where wildly roam
The Garamantians: of all Afric's tribes
The lonely temple. An oracular Jove
Here stands; unlike the Jove of Rome, whose grasp
Brandishes thunder, but his forehead wreath'd
With horns, and Hammon Jupiter his name.
Not there have Afric's elephantine teeth
Enrich'd the burnish'd shrines; nor gifts emblazed
The fane with orient gems. Though the black race
Of Æthiopia, though the wealthy tribes
Of Araby, and India's nations, own

Hammon their only Jove, as yet the God
Is poor in offerings; and, from age to age,
His fane hath stood, unviolate by wealth.
The Godhead here of ancient manners reigns,
And guards his temples from the gold of Rome.
A verdant wood, the solitary growth
Of Lybia's wild immeasurable wastes,
Bespeaks the haunt of Deity. Whate'er
Of desert with its arid dust divides
The Berenician region from the soil
Of burning Leptis, knows no leafy shade:
Hammon alone is bosom'd in a grove.
A secret fountain bids the foliage spring,
Binds the dry dust, and moist connects the sands.
Before the temple's doors a multitude,
Sent from the farthest east, imploring stood,
And of the horned Jupiter inquired
New destinies. But to the Latian chief
The crowds gave way. Then Cato's followers urged
To search the counsels of a God, renown'd
Wide through the Lybian world, and judge, if time,
Through lengthening ages, had belied his fame.
But Labienus, chief, exhorts to hear

The heavenly voice, and probe th' events to come.
" Behold," he cried, " the fortune of the way,
And Fate, unask'd, have brought thee visibly
Into the Godhead's presence, and have placed
Within thy reach the counsels from on high.
Him may we take, our mighty guide, athwart
The sandy wilderness, and learn from him
The hazards of the war. To whom shall Heaven
Reveal its mysteries, and pronounce its will,
Unless to holy Cato? sure, thy life
Was ever order'd by the laws divine,
And thou hast traced the footsteps of the God.
Now, face to face, 'tis given thee to converse
With Jove. Inquire of impious Cæsar's fate;
Snatch from the rolls of destiny the doom
That waits our country. Whether she shall wield
Her people's rights, and minister her laws,
Or the brave hope of her intestine war
Utterly perish. Fill thy sacred breast
With that oracular voice: at least, demand
What is that virtue which thou sternly lovest,
And what that honour which should guide our
steps."

Full of the God, whom secretly he felt
Within the silence of the soul, such words
Fell from the lips of Cato, as might seem
In truth the voice of cavern'd oracle:
" What, Labienus, dost thou bid me seek?
Whether 'twere better, on the field of death
To fall with freedom, or to crouch beneath
A tyrant's yoke? Whether the life of man
Itself be nothing, but protracted life
Be all in all? If to the wise and good
Import the shortest or the longest day?
If aught of outward violence can harm
The virtuous man? If Fortune's threats be weak
Opposed by Virtue's strength? If 'tis enough
That honour aims at praise, and mere success
Swells not the sum of glory? This we know:
Not Hammon's self could stamp the conscious truth
More deeply on our souls. We feel within
Some secret contact with the Powers on high:
And, though the fanes be silent, what we act
Comes from the God within us. Heaven requires
No utter'd sounds. What it behoved to know,
The Author of existence spake, at once,

To all that drew the breath of infant life:
Or, has he chosen out these desert sands,
That some few roamers of the wild may hear
His oracles; and buried in the dust
The words of Truth? Say, where hath Deity
His habitation, but in earth, sea, air,
And heaven, and virtue? Seek we then beyond
For Deities? above us, and around,
Whate'er we see, where'er we move, is GOD.
Others, who doubt, may hang upon the lips
Of divination, and suspend their fears
On future fortunes. Me no oracles
Assure: inevitable death alone
Assures me. Both the coward and the brave
Alike must die: this Jove hath plainly told;
Seek we to know no more." He said; and turn'd
From those oracular shrines; their truth untried,
And unimpair'd: so leaving to the faith
Of eastern crowds their unintreated God.

VALERIUS FLACCUS.

Aft. Ch. 69.

ARGONAUTICS.

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR: WHYTE.

CAIUS Valerius Flaccus was surnamed Setinus, from Setia, a town in Campania: now Sezza, in the Campagna di Roma, where he was born; but it appears from Martial that he was a citizen of Padua; and we find that he was one of that numerous tribe of poets, who, in Juvenal's phrase, "are praised and starve."

Flaccus! to this my trade who bring'st renown!
Thou hope and foster-son of Padua's town:

Leave the Pierian songs and Sisters Nine:
Not one with silver will thy coffers line:
Why sue Apollo? to Minerva hie:
To all the Gods she lends on usury.
What bears the Bacchic ivy? hasten thou
Where the dun olive bends its greenish bough.
The Heliconian springs, wreaths, goddess-lyres,
Bring the loud "bravo:" that in breath expires;
Permessus', Cyrrha's banks are barren—come!
Nearer and richer is the bar of Rome.
There coin chinks shrill; but round our rostrums bare,
And audience-benches, bugs are all our fare.

Epigram lxxvii. *Book* I.

The Argonautics were left imperfect; and Quintilian observes that by the untimely death of Valerius much has been lost to the world of letters.

Valerius Flaccus has paraphrased Apollonius, and copied Virgil. His want of originality however does not seem to account sufficiently for the fastidious neglect with which he has been treated: for is Virgil himself original? Where Valerius imitates, it is with the spirit of an original writer; and it is a remarkable proof of his possessing real genius, that those passages, in which he has trusted to his own invention, are among the best of his poem. He has been called flat and cold; because, as it should seem, he has retained the unaffected

nobleness of the pure Virgilian style, and has nothing of the tumour and glitter of Claudian. But his diction is no less splendid than chaste: in clearness and lustre of description he is not unworthy of comparison with Virgil; and although inferior to his Grecian predecessor in the finer touches of character and the bolder strokes of nature, he is not deficient either in tenderness or energy; and far exceeds the poet of Honorius in the genuine expression of passionatesentiment.

VALERIUS FLACCUS.

CHARMING OF THE DRAGON,
AND FLIGHT OF MEDEA.

TREMBLING within her chamber walls, afraid
Of her own deeds, remain'd the Colchian maid.
The threats and furies of her father rise
In flitting vision to her wandering eyes:
No more the azure deeps inflict dismay,
And no far land to her is far away.
Whate'er the bark, whate'er the ocean be,
She pants to climb the deck, nor fears the sea.
Then on her virgin fillets she bestow'd
A last, last kiss; while tears in torrents flow'd:
Clung with fond arms round that deserted bed;
And rent her cheeks and hair: for, ere she fled,
The traces of her ancient dream again
Rose wildering on her melancholy brain.
On the prest couch her grovelling form she throws,
And, thus exclaiming, breathes her parting woes.

"Oh did my father these embraces give,
And fondly bless the wretched fugitive!
Oh couldst thou, most revered Æetes! see
These streaming tears! for not more loved is he;
No—trust me, father! not more dear than thee!
Oh! that the swelling waves might close above,
And I might perish with the man I love!
My prayers I leave thee: may thy reign endure
To long old age, in placid rest secure:
And other children, oh my father! be
Worthier thy trust, and kinder far than me!"
She said; and drew from caskets, fraught with death,
Drugs prized by Jason to his latest breath:
The magic poisons intricate inroll'd
Within her virgin vesture's bosom fold;
With these her jewell'd necklace, artful, stored,
And in her mantle wrap'd the murderous sword.
Then forth she leap'd; as if the Furies urged
Her haste, and with their twisted serpents scourged.
So with scared foot the flying Ino leaps,
Clasping th' unheeded babe, among the deeps:

With vain pursuit the husband stretches o'er
The isthmus sands, and raging stamps the shore.
The hero, first, had sought the grove; and stood,
Urged by his anxious hopes, amidst the wood,
Shrouded in shade; yet, seen from far, the grace
Of heavenly beauty flush'd his youthful face.
As, while his comrades through the thicket stray'd,
The Latmian hunter rested in the shade,
Worthy to draw a Goddess from the sky;
And lo! the moon, with crescent veil'd, drew nigh.
So, through the mists of overshadowing night,
The bloom of Jason breathed its rosy light;
And, gentle as the moon, amid the grove
Stole the soft form of his expected Love.
Behold! as, trembling, light, on flitting wings
The dove, in darkness, 'gainst the passer springs;
So flew Medea, panting with her fears,
To Jason's arms, and he soft-whispering cheers
Th' enfolded maid: and "oh! he soothing cried,
"Oh! of my sacred home the future pride!
Thou, virgin, thou alone art worthy found
Of all our wanderings, the wide seas around;

I ask no fleece; enough if o'er the sea
My vessel waft a prize so fair as thee!
But, since thou canst, let this kind gift increase
Thy rich deservings: grant the golden fleece.
The precious hide must grace our task'd return;
For this my friends in zealous glory burn."

He said; and soft with suppliant kisses press'd
Her finger-tips: sobs heaved the virgin's breast;
And, with new grief, she cried; "for thy dear sake
From country and from realm my flight I take:
I speak not as a queen; my sceptre now
Is fallen; the slave of an enamour'd vow!
Keep then the faith which thou hast vow'd to me,
The first soft oath, thou know'st, was breathed from thee;
Those oaths the Gods have witness'd from on high;
The stars behold us from the silent sky.
With thee I tempt the seas: with thee explore
Whatever ocean, and whatever shore.
But let me not, on this ill-omen'd day,
Be torn a culprit from thy arms away;
Nor drag'd, with blushes, to my parents' eyes;
Forbid the shame, ye pitying Deities!

Forbid it, oh my guest!" in bounding haste
She rush'd, all frantic, through the briery waste.
Close at her side the watchful hero press'd,
And pitying saw the struggles of her breast.
When through the gloom the youth a flame survey'd,
And a fierce light shone quivering through the shade.
"Whence glows the reddening Heaven?" he,
trembling, cries;
"What dismal star is gleaming from the skies?"
The virgin answer'd; "Lo! before thy gaze
Askance the dragon's eyes terrific blaze;
And brandish'd thus, athwart the burnish'd air,
From his keen crest the lightning splendours glare.
Me only he discerns: in fawning mood,
Crouching, with soften'd hiss he craves his food.
Say now if thou wilt tear the spoil from high,
While on his foe is bent that watchful eye;
Or shall my art his glance in slumber shade,
And, first, the serpent at thy feet be laid?"
Silent he stood: the magic maid impress'd
So deep a horror on his heaving breast.
The Colchian princess lifts her hands in air,
And scatters towards the stars her streaming hair.

While chanted rhymes barbaric cadence keep,
Her moving lips invoke the Sire of sleep:
"Hear, mighty Sleep! the Colchian virgin's call!
Where'er thou lingerest on this earthly ball.
I bid thee haste from all beneath the pole,
And rush collected on the serpent's soul!
Oft have I pour'd thy horn's oblivious dew
To still the rapid lightning, as it flew:
The surging seas; the turbid clouds on high;
The sparkling stars, and meteors of the sky.
I call thee now in all thy mightiest power:
Come like thy brother death, in this momentous hour.
Guard of the golden fleece! let sleep allay
Thy restless watching: turn thine eyes away.
At length 'tis time: what treachery canst thou fear,
The Colchian maid, thy own Medea, near?
Myself will guard the grove, and watch the while;
Then let repose thy long, long toils beguile."
He not relax'd his weary folds; but fear'd
The rest permitted, and by toil endear'd;
Yet shuddering felt the cloud of slumber creep,
And from the branches shook the balm of sleep.

The Colchian maid her foaming venoms threw,
And waved the bough, immersed in Lethe's dew:
With chanted rhyme she lulls his drooping eyes,
With hand and tongue the Stygian charm she plies;
And still persists: till whelming slumber holds
The burning wrath that writhes his struggling folds.
He falls his crest: he droops his languid head;
And lies, beyond the fleece, in trailing volumes spread:
Like refluent Po, or Nile of sevenfold train,
Or Alpheus winding o'er Hesperia's plain.
But when Medea saw the folds unwound,
And her loved dragon grovelling on the ground;
Cast at her length, her clasping arms she threw;
And, "Ah! not such thou met'st Medea's view,
When yesternight thy opening jaws I fed,
With honied cates, and medicated bread.
How moveless is thy weight! how slow thy breath!
At least my hand is guiltless of thy death.
Unhappy serpent! when in evil day
Thy eyes no glittering fleece beneath the bough survey.

Yield to the God; and seek a happier lot
In other groves, the faithless maid forgot.
Nor may thy well-known hiss my flight pursue
From sea to sea; my keen remorse renew.
But thou, oh Jason! tremble at delay:
Haste, snatch the fleece, and bear thy prize away.
By my pernicious arts, my injured sire
Has seen his brazen-footed bulls expire;
Spell-doom'd by me the earth-born giants bled;
Stretch'd at thy feet the dragon bows his head;
Now may I hope the crown of guilt is won;
Now all is finish'd; now my crimes are done."
Then, while he question'd how, with grappling hold,
To reach the elm-tree top, that waved with gold;
"On, on," she cried; "and o'er the dragon's mail
With firm-pressed foot the height ascending scale."
He linger'd not; but at the maid's behest,
With firm-set heel the bulky serpent press'd;
And to th' aerial elm ascending clung,
On whose tall boughs the hide resplendent hung:

Like fiery clouds, that flush with ruddy glare,
Or Iris, gliding through the purple air;
When loosely girt her dazzling mantle flows,
And 'gainst the sun in arching colours glows.
Exulting Jason grasped the shining hide,
His last of labours, and his envied pride.
Slow from the groaning branch the fleece was rent;
Of Phryxus' flight the splendid monument
For years long past: the tree reluctant bends,
And sudden darkness o'er its top descends.
Emerging from the wood, they took their way
Through plains that glanced beneath the gleaming ray,
To where the river opened in a bay.
His limbs and back are wrapt in shaggy gold,
His left arm mantled in the glistening fold:
So from Nemea's den Alcides strode,
The lion's yellow spoil around his shoulders flow'd.
Now, where his friends their destined station hold,
He breaks the darkness, garmented in gold:
The Thracians shout: instinctive Argo glides
Swift to the bank; self-moving through the tides.

With steps impetuous Jason trod the shore;
The fleece of downy gold he sent before.
Then, with the maid, who shrank in wondering fear,
Leap'd on the deck, and couch'd his quivering spear.
Dread horrors now the parents' ears affright;
Their fated house, the virgin's fraud, and flight;
In sudden arms the brother blazed along,
And the moved city pour'd its gathering throng:
While, nerved with anguish of indignant rage,
Æetes flew, forgetful of his age.
With bristling spears in vain the shores are lined;
The darted vessel flies before the wind.
Distracted on the shore the mother stands,
And tow'rds the boundless ocean spreads her hands.
The sister, every mother, every bride,
Hang round her steps, and hover o'er the tide:
Thy sweet companions, oh, deluded fair!
The partners of thy virgin sports are there:
Wild starting from the rest, the mother flies,
And fills the air with shrieks and agonies:
"Stay thy rash flight! and, from the distant main,
For oh! thou can'st, my daughter! turn again!

Whither depart? the vessel backward steer;
Thy friends, thy still fond father, wait thee here.
Here is thy own hereditary sway:
Then why to Greece, in trusting rashness, stray?
What place to thee will Grecian maids resign;
A foreign virgin, say, what claims are thine?
Is this the house? are these the wedding ties?
Is this the day to bless my aged eyes?
Oh! might I with a vulture's talons rend
That robber's cheeks! his very deck ascend;
And, audible, in clear and piercing strain,
Demand my daughter at his hands again!
Th' Albanian monarch's bride the maid should be;
No compact, Jason! had we join'd with thee:
No amorous theft did Pelias' lips command;
No rape of virgins from our Colchian strand.
Thine be the golden fleece! unenvied, thine!—
Nay more—our temple's treasures we resign.
But why these wild unjust reproaches give?
She is, herself, the willing fugitive:
So glows her breast to guilty love resign'd;
How every truth comes thronging on my mind!

Since the Thessalian vessel touch'd the shore,
Thy food, sad maid! thy pastime pleased no more;
Thy colour paled; thou would'st in murmurs speak;
The flushing red came wandering o'er thy cheek;
And the gay smile, that flash'd its transient grace,
But shone reflected from another's face.
Why was the dreadful mischief not disclosed?
Then Jason were our son: nor thou exposed
To shameful flight; or I at least had known
To share a crime which now is all thy own;
Had shared thy wanderings o'er the boundless sea,
And trod Thessalia's distant soil with thee:
In what far town that cruel stranger dwell,
Had I been with thee, it had then been well!"
She spoke, in loud and passionate lament:
With shrieks the shrilling air the sister rent:
Alike the damsels to the winds exclaim,
With empty words, and call the nymph by name:
But thee, far off, the ocean gales convey,
And thy Fates waft thee on the destined way.

Silius Italicus.

SILIUS ITALICUS.

Aft. Ch. 72.

THE PUNIC WAR.

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR: ROSS.

CAIUS Silius Italicus distinguished himself at Rome by his eloquence at the bar. The place of his birth is supposed to have been either Italica in Spain, or Corfinium, in Italy; which, during the social war, received the name of Italica. He filled the rank of consul the same year that Nero was assassinated. Under that Emperor, he had hurt his reputation by acting as a state-accuser; but he retrieved his character, and used his interest with the profligate

tyrant Vitellius discreetly and humanely. The purity of his administration, while proconsul in Asia, obtained him deserved honour. In the decline of life he retired into Campania; and was not attracted again to Rome, even by the accession of the new emperor, Trajan: who was not offended by his preference of retirement. He was an invalid, and often kept his chamber; where, however, he was visited by artists and men of letters. He was enthusiastically fond of the arts; and his several villas contained curious and valuable collections of books, statues, and pictures. He particularly valued the portrait of Virgil, to whose tomb, near Naples, he paid solemn visits; and whose birth-day he annually celebrated. He was afflicted with an incurable abscess, which at length occasioned him such extreme suffering that he determined on putting an end to his existence, by abstaining from sustenance. He died, in this manner, in his 75th year.

The Latinity of Silius is elegant and pure, and his versification round and smooth; but his manner is so studiously modelled on that of Virgil, as to have obtained him the appellation of "Virgil's

Ape." Yet Silius is by no means destitute of genius. He is an accurate observer, and paints to the eye: his descriptions are strong, distinct, and animated; and the boldness of fancy, with which he expatiates among the sublimer scenes of nature, effectually repells the vulgar accusation, that the character of his poetry is tame and spiritless. In the plan of his poem however he has shown a timidity of invention, by his servile compliance with Epic precedent. Virgil, who treated a subject connected with the ancient tale of Troy, naturally adopted the Homeric machinery; but the Romans must have smiled in incredulous derision, to see Venus throwing the fires of her husband Vulcan at the head of the river Trebia, who had risen from his bed of waters to expostulate with Scipio.

SILIUS ITALICUS.

PASSAGE OF HANNIBAL OVER THE ALPS.

Beyond the Pyrenean's lofty bound,
Through blackening forests shagg'd with pine around,
The Carthaginian pass'd; and, fierce, explored
The Volcan champaign with his wasting sword.
Then trod the threatening banks, with hastening force,
Where Rhone high-swelling rolls its sweeping course.
From Alpine heights, and steep rocks, cap'd with snow,
Gushes the Rhone, where Gaul is stretch'd below.
Cleaves with a mighty surge the foaming plain,
And with broad torrent rushes in the main.
Swol'n Arar mingles slow its lingering tide,
That, silent gliding, scarcely seems to glide:
Caught in the headlong whirlpool, breaks away,
Snatch'd through the plains, and starting from delay;

Plunged in the deep the hurried stream is tost,
And in the greater flood its name is lost.
Alert the troops the bridgeless current brave,
With head and neck upraised above the wave,
Secure their steely swords; or firm divide,
With sinewy arms, the strong and boisterous tide.
The war-steed, bound on rafts, the river treads;
Nor the vast elephant retarding dreads
To tempt the ford; while scatter'd earth they strow
O'er the hid planks, that hide the stream below.
Loosed from the banks the gradual cord extends,
And on the flood th' unconscious beast descends.
As the troop'd quadrupeds, down-sliding slow,
Launch'd on the stream that, quivering, dash'd, below;
Beneath th' incumbent weight, with starting tide,
The rapid Rhone pour'd back on every side:
Toss'd its white eddies on the frothy strand,
And, sullen, murmur'd on its chafing sand.
Now stretch'd the onward host their long array
Through the Tricastine plains; and wound their way
O'er smooth ascents, and where Vocontia yields
The level champaign of her verdant fields.

Athwart their easy march Druentia spread
The devastation of its torrent bed:
Turbid with stones and trunks of trees, descends
The Alpine stream; the ashen forests rends;
Rolls mountain fragments, crumbling to the shock,
And beats with raving surge the channel'd rock,
Of nameless depth its ever-changing bed
Betrays the fording warrior's faithless tread;
The broad and flat pontoon is launch'd in vain,
High swells the flood with deluges of rain;
Snatch'd with his arms the staggering soldier slides,
And mangled bodies toss in gulfy tides.
But now, th' o'erhanging Alps, in prospect near,
Efface remember'd toils in future fear.
While with eternal frost, with hailstones piled,
The ice of ages grasps those summits wild,
Stiffening with snow the mountain soars in air,
And fronts the rising sun, unmelted by the glare.
As, the Tartarean gulf, beneath the ground,
Yawns to the gloomy lake in hell's profound;
So high earth's heaving mass the air invades,
And shrouds the heaven with intercepting shades.

No Spring, no Summer strews its glories here,
Lone Winter dwells upon these summits drear;
And guards his mansion round the endless year.
Mustering from far around his grisly form
Black rains, and hail-stone showers, and clouds of storm.
Here in their wrathful kingdom whirlwinds roam,
And the blasts struggle in their Alpine home.
The upward sight a swimming darkness shrouds,
And the high crags recede into the clouds.
First Hercules those untried heights explored,
And 'midst th' aerial hills, adventurous, soar'd;
The Gods beheld him cleave through many a cloud,
While sinking rocks beneath his footstep bow'd:
And, striving, leave the vanquish'd steeps below,
Where never foot had touch'd th' eternal snow.
Did Taurus, piled on Athos, pierce the skies;
And Mimas, heaved on Rhodope, arise;
Hæmus its steepy mass on Othrys roll;
And Pelion, rear'd on Ossa, shade the pole;
Mountain on mountain would in vain be hurl'd,
And lessening shrink beside the Alpine world.
A lingering holy dread the soldier bound;
His step hung doubtful, as on sacred ground:

It seem'd that Nature's self th' access denied;
That their invading arms the Gods defied.
But no rude Alp, no terror of the scene,
Moved Hannibal, undaunted and serene:
Indignant sadness only changed his brow;
As with exhorting words he quicken'd now
Their languid hopes, and hearts: "What shame were ours,
Tired with the favour of the heavenly Powers;
Sick of our long success, those glorious bays
That crown'd the labour of our well-fought days;
To turn our recreant backs on mountain snows,
And slothful yield, where only rocks are foes?
Oh! now my friends, e'en now, believe, ye climb
Despotic Rome's proud walls, and tread, sublime,
The Capitol of Jove! thus, thus we gain
The prize of toil, and Tiber owns our chain."
He spoke; nor they delay'd: the troops he drew
Up the steep hills, their promised spoil in view:
Transgress'd th' Herculean road, and first made known
Tracts yet untrodden and a path their own:
Where inaccessible the desert rose,
He burst a passage through forbidden snows;

He, first, th' opposing ridge ascending tried,
And bade th' unconquerable cliff subside;
Cheer'd on the lingering troops; and, beckoning high,
Stood on the crag, and shouted from the sky.
Oft, where the slippery path belied the tread,
And concrete frost the whitening cliff bespread,
Through the reluctant ice his arm explored
The upward track, that open'd to his sword.
Oft the thaw'd surface from the footstep shrank;
Suck'd in th' absorbing gulf the warriors sank;
Or from high ridge the mass of rushing snow
In humid ruin whelm'd the ranks below.
On dusky wings the west-wind swept the heaven;
Full in their face the snowy whirls were driven;
Now from their empty grasp the arms are torn,
And sudden on the howling whirlwind borne,
Snatch'd on the blast, the wrested weapons fly,
And wheel in airy eddies round the sky.
When, striving o'er th' ascent, the height they gain
With planted foot, increasing toils remain:
Yet other heights their upward view surprise,
And opening mountains upon mountains rise.

No joy results from breathless efforts past;
The plains are won, yet still the mountains last:
Repeated summits fright their aching eyes,
While one white heap of frost in circling prospect lies.
Thus in mid-sea, the mariner explores,
With fruitless longing, the receded shores:
When no fresh wind, with spirit-stirring gale,
Bends the tall mast, or fills the flagging sail;
O'er boundless deeps his eyes exhausted rove,
And rest relieved upon the skies above.
O'er jagged heights, and icy fragments rude,
Thus climb they, 'midst the mountain solitude;
And from the rocky summits, haggard, show
Their half-wild visage, clotted thick with snow.
Continual drizzlings of the drifting air
Scar their rough cheeks, and stiffen in their hair.
Now, pour'd from craggy dens, a headlong force,
The Alpine hordes hang threatening on their course;
Track the known thickets, beat the mountain snow,
Bound o'er the steeps, and hovering hem the foe.
Here changed the scene; the snows were crimson'd o'er,
The hard ice trickled to the tepid gore:

With pawing hoof the courser delved the ground,
And rigid frost his clinging fetlock bound:
Nor yet his slippery fall the peril ends;
The fracturing ice the bony socket rends.
Twelve times they measured the long light of day,
And night's bleak gloom, and urged through wounds their way;
Till on the topmost ridge their camp was flung,
High o'er the steepy crags, in airy distance, hung.

MARTIAL.

Aft. Ch. 82.

EPIGRAMS.

English Translators:

KENDAL, HAY, WRIGHT.

MARCUS Valerius Martialis was born at Bilbilis, a town of Celtiberia, the modern Arragon. His father's name was Fronto, and that of his mother, Flaccilla. He repaired to Rome, when very young, and was destined for the bar; but his inclinations were turned towards poetry; and he acquired a sort of fashionable fame by a peculiar talent at satirical epigram. Domitian rewarded his pane-

gyrics by creating him a Roman knight, and raising him to the tribunate. He was patronized by Silius Italicus, and befriended by the younger Pliny; who, on his retiring from Rome in the decline of life, assisted him with money, of which he appears to have stood in need; and who speaks of him in one of his letters with kindness and regret, apparently softened and pleased by his compliments. After his return to Spain, he married a lady of the name of Marcella. The bride was rich, and the bridegroom grateful: he tells her,

Thou art, alone, another Rome to me:

and, in another epigram, he talks of the stately house and gardens, which she brought him:

This little kingdom my Marcella gave,

The example of Martial has associated the idea of a sting, or point, with the epigram; which implied originally a short and simple inscription, or effusion. The invention, which reserves a thought for the close, must be admitted to be extremely artificial; and where there is this appearance of stratagem, and laboured contrivance, the humour

must appear forced. It is the lowest kind of wit which deals in points, and clenches. The style of Martial is terse, and his fancy was not without poetical images. But he has practised and defended a gross and shameless indecency; and his book may be called the "sink" of all the impurities of Rome. The general character of his pages may be tolerably guessed from the partiality of that arch-patron of debauchees, the emperor Verus, who, when he spoke of Martial, was accustomed to call him "his Virgil."

MARTIAL.

TO A BOASTING CHARACTER.

FINE lectures Attalus rehearses;
Pleads finely; writes fine tales, and verses;
Fine epigrams, fine farces vie
With grammar and astrology:
He finely sings, and dances finely;
Plays tennis; fiddles most divinely;
All finely done, and nothing well:
Then, if a man the truth may tell,
This all-accomplish'd Punchinello
Is a most busy, idle fellow.

TO THE POSSESSOR OF A FINE SEAT.

So thick your planes and laurels spread,
And cypress groves so rear the head
High in the air; your baths so wide
Expand their streams on every side;
They'd shade and bathe full half the town;
Yet shades and baths are all your own.
Your porch on hundred columns soars:
You tread on alabaster floors;
The race-horse beats your dusty ring;
Fountains, with ever-wasting spring,
Fall on the ear with gliding sound,
And spacious courts are opening round.
'Tis all so grand and so complete,
There is no room to sleep or eat:
How excellently lodged, Sir, here,
In this no-lodging you appear!

TO A FOP.

They tell me, Cotilus, that you're a beau;
What this is, Cotilus, I wish to know.
" A beau is one who, with the nicest care,
In parted locks divides his curling hair;
One, who with balm and cinnamon smells sweet
Whose humming lips some Spanish air repeat;
Whose naked arms are smooth'd with pummice-stone,
And tost about with graces all his own:
A beau is one who takes his constant seat,
From morn till evening, where the ladies meet;
And ever, on some sopha hovering near,
Whispers some nothing in some fair-one's ear;
Who scribbles thousand billets-doux a day;
Still reads, and scribbles; seals, and sends away:
A beau is one who shrinks, if nearly prest
By the coarse garment of a neighbour guest;
Who knows who flirts with whom, and still is found
At each good table in successive round:

A beau is one—none better knows than he
A race-horse, and his noble pedigree—"
Indeed?—why, Cotilus, if this be so,
What teasing trifling thing is call'd a beau!

TO TAURUS.

While rhetorician, lawyer, tempts thy choice,
And what thou'lt be still hangs upon thy voice:
Wilt thou old Priam's age, or Nestor's, wait?
Now wilt thou fix? 'tis long ago too late:
Nay come—this year three rhetoricians died:
Come—hast thou spirit? brains? the schools are wide.
If you dislike the schools, the law-courts brawl
To rouze e'en Marsyas from his pedestal.
Come ho! decide; or must we still gaze on?
Doubt'st thou what *something* thou wilt fix upon?
Thou can'st be nothing now: time was: 'tis gone.

TO CÆCILIANUS.

"OH times! oh manners!" Tully cried of old;
When Catiline in impious plots grew bold:
When in fell arms the son and father stood,
And the sad earth reek'd red with civil blood:
Why now—why now, "oh times! oh manners" cry?
What is it now that shocks thy purity?
No sword now maddens, and no chiefs destroy,
But all is peace, security, and joy;
These times, these manners, that so vile are grown,
Prythee, Cæcilian, are they not *thy own*?

ON THE GIRL EROTION.

THE girl that was to ear and sight
More soft of tone, of skin more white,
Than plumaged swans, that yield in death
The sweetest murmur of their breath:
Smooth as Galesus' soft-fleeced flocks;
Dainty as shells on Lucrine rocks;
As red-sea pearls; bright ivory's glow;
Unsullied lilies; virgin snow:
Whose locks were tip'd with ruddy gold,
Like wool that clothes the Bætic fold;
Like braided hair of girls of Rhine;
As tawny field-mouse sleek and fine:
Whose vermeil mouth breathed Pæstum's rose;
Or balm fresh honey-combs disclose;
Or amber yielding odour sweet
From the chafing hand's soft heat:
By whom the peacock was not fair;
Nor squirrels pets, nor phœnix rare:
Erotion crumbles in her urn;
Warm from the pile her ashes burn:

Ere yet had closed her sixteenth year
The Fates accurst have spread her bier;
And with her all I doated on,
My loves, my joys, my sports, are gone.
Yet Pætus, who, like me distrest,
Is fain to beat his mourning breast,
And tear his hair beside a grave,
Asks, "Blush you not to mourn a slave?
I mourn a high, rich, noble wife;
And yet I bear my lot of life!"
Thy fortitude exceeds all bounds:
Thou hast two hundred thousand pounds:
Thou bear'st—'tis true—thy lot of life:
Thou bear'st the jointure of thy wife.

TO CALLISTRATUS.

YES—I am poor, Callistratus! I own;
And so was ever; yet not quite unknown,
Graced with a knight's degree; nor this alone:
But through the world my verse is frequent sung;
And "that is he!" sounds buzz'd from every tongue:
And what to few, when dust, the Fates assign,
In bloom and freshness of my days is mine.
Thy ceilings on a hundred columns rest;
Wealth, as of upstart freemen, bursts thy chest:
Nile flows in fatness o'er thy ample fields;
Cisalpine Gaul thy silky fleeces yields:
Lo! such thou art, and such am I: like me
Callistratus! thou canst not hope to be:
A hundred of the crowd resemble thee.

SULPITIA.

Age of Domitian.

ONE SATIRE.

SULPITIA was a noble matron of Rome: singularly eminent as a poetess. She was the first, according to her own testimony, who set her countrywomen the example of contesting the palm of genius with the poetesses of Greece. She must have alluded to her lyrical compositions: as, that there were Roman women who, before her, had excelled in general poetry, appears from the instance of Cornificia, in the age of Augustus, whose poems are lost. Sulpitia composed certain "Lusus," or Fugitive Pieces, in

lyric measure, and on subjects of love; addressed to her husband Calenus. They are eulogized, with elaborate galantry, by Martial.

Let all those maids Sulpitia's lays peruse,
Who for one only youth have sigh'd;
Let all those husbands read Sulpitia's Muse,
Who seek to please one only bride.

Not of the Colchian princess' rage she sings,
Nor Atreus' feast, with blood imbrued;
Scylla and Byblis are forgotten things;
No fab'lous themes her ear delude.

She teaches loves affectionate and chaste;
Delights, and sports, and railleries:
No lays would seem with looser sallies graced,
Yet none more virtuously wise.

Such pleasantries Egeria might impart
To Numa's ear, in dripping cell:
Hadst thou, oh Sappho! learn'd with her thy art,
Or she, thy mistress, tuned the shell.

More subtle were thy genius, chaste thy fame;
And if, together seen with thee,
The rigorous Phaon had confess'd a flame,
And to Sulpitia bow'd the knee.

Yet had enamour'd Phaon vainly sigh'd;
She not to Jove would yield her charms;
Nor live, e'en Bacchus' or Apollo's bride,
Torn from her own Calenus' arms.

Martial was not the best possible judge of what is delicate in sentiment, and there is reason to suspect

that the chastity of Sulpitia's productions consisted in the single circumstance, that her husband was the subject of them. The old scholiast on Juvenal has preserved a fragment of Sulpitia, allusive to Calenus: it consists of only two lines; but these, unfortunately for the epigrammatist, are of a wanton complexion. That her writings were free, may be deduced also from the testimony of Ausonius, in his "Nuptial Cento," where, in defending his licentiousness by the common sophism, that the verse and the life of the writer are at variance, pleads, among other examples, that "the pieces of Sulpitia are prurient, but her forehead had the frown of chastity."

From the conjectural judgment which might be formed of Sulpitia, as a lively, beautiful, and fascinating lady, the theme of Roman galantry, and fashionable admiration, in an age not remarkable for the strictness of public or private morals; and, from the scrap of her poetry, above alluded to, it should appear that the mere circumstance of a libertine gaiety in the sentiments offers no objection, why those poems in the book of Elegies, printed as

the fourth of Tibullus, of which several assume to be the composition of a Sulpitia, should not be hers. But there are marks of their being, if not the productions of Tibullus himself, at least the compositions of a Sulpitia who lived in the Augustan age. The name of *Messala* occurs more than once; the favourite of this Sulpitia is a youth called *Cerinthus*; and it happens, oddly enough, that Tibullus, in one of his undisputed elegies, addresses a *Cerinthus*; and that Horace alludes to a youth of the same name, in illustration of personal beauty. Yet on the clumsy supposition, that there *might* have been another *Messala* in the time of Domitian, and another *Cerinthus*, also beautiful and a youth, Dr. Grainger, the elegant translator of Tibullus, boldly isolates the whole fourth book of Tibullian elegies, and inscribes it "Poems of Sulpitia;" which are ushered in by a glowing panegyric on her own person! I have no doubt that the other pieces, assuming to be written by the same Sulpitia, are from the hand of the author of her panegyric; and, the names of Messala and Cerinthus form a coincidence sufficiently strong to justify the belief that

this author was Tibullus. The assumption of another's name is a common poetic fiction. The supposed inferiority of this fourth book seems to me a refinement of hypercriticism: nor is it so surprising that an author should be inferior to himself. Some further light is thrown upon this question of the lady's identity by a jealous epigram addressed to Cerinthus:

> Sulpitia, *Servius' daughter*, needs must prove
> Less worthy of Cerinthus' love
> Than the poor wench, with basket on her arm,
> Whose harlot gown is now his charm.

Now Servius Sulpitius is the name of the orator and lawyer, the friend of Cicero. *This* Sulpitia therefore is *not* the poetess of the age of Domitian.

The satire on Domitian, by some ascribed to Juvenal, with whose works it is usually found; and by others, very strangely, to Ausonius, has all the internal evidence of being the genuine composition of the Sulpitia eulogized by Martial. The name of Calenus occurs in it, as if to identify its author. It is in a style of grave and dignified contempt: the tone of sentiment is elevated, and philosophical;

the diction nervous, and the imagery poetical. The versification has considerable elegance and force; and several of the lines are perfectly Virgilian in the structure of their harmony. The satire is one of the most interesting fragments of ancient literature; both from its intrinsic merit, and as it is the only relic of a lady of singular genius and distinguished fame.

SULPITIA.

SATIRE
ON THE DECREE OF DOMITIAN
FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHERS.

MUSE! in those strains, that arms and chiefs rehearse,
Brief let me now unwind the theme of verse.
With thee retired in solitude apart,
I've weigh'd the musings of my inmost heart.
No more I roll Phalæcian numbers fleet,
Nor tripled metre of Iambic feet;
Nor that, which Hipponax with anger fired,
Breaking the foot Archilochus inspired;
Nor what of other measures yet remains,
Among the thousand sports of those my strains:
For I first taught the Roman dames to vye
With Grecia's nymphs of lyric minstrelsy.
With graver purpose I, advised, omit
These various turns and poignancies of wit;
And in those higher numbers woo thine ear:
Lean to thy client's prayer; descend, and hear!

Oh say, Calliope! what now devise
The hidden counsels of yon ruling skies?
And does the sire of Gods, in jealous rage,
Transform our earth, and change the Roman age?
Snatch from the dying race the arts of old,
Bid speech be dumb, and reason quit its hold;
Men acorns craunch, as when of yore they rose,
And grovelling lap the brooklet as it flows?
Preserves he other cities, other lands,
But spreads o'er Remus' race his wasting hands?
What shall we think? in warlike valour bred,
And peaceful wisdom, Rome uprear'd her head.
In social arms, that valour, practised first,
On seas of Sicily, and Carthage burst,
And spent itself abroad: resistless hurl'd,
Swept every rival rule, and snatch'd the world.
Then, as the race-horse, in th' Achæan course
Unrivall'd victor, flags with languid force;
And sluggish droops, with unexerted strength,
Rome, ceasing to contend, relax'd at length:
Reposed at home, and curb'd by reins of peace,
Perused the laws, and search'd the arts of Greece.

This meed her wars by earth and sea repaid,
And what she won her counsels mildly sway'd.
On these her glory stood; for these were all:
Remove the base, she totter'd to her fall:
Or Jove with lying tongue declared in Heaven,
"An endless empire I to Troy have given."

But Rome's mock-emperor, but that pathic, white
With pamper'd glut of bloated appetite,
E'en he, the sages' race and name and art
All, all he outlaws; all from Rome depart.
What have we done? We leave the Greeks, and come
From distant cities to enlighten Rome;
But as the Gauls, at bold Camillus pale,
Fled from the sword that bent the trembling scale,
Our outcast sages fly; that deadly weight,
Their books, are rooted from the Roman state.
Then Africanus, by old Ennius taught,
And that Numantine Scipio, falsely thought;
And all that fruitful band, whose names renown'd
The second Punic war with virtues crown'd;
Whom ancient Cato's text divine inspired;
When, as the highest knowledge, they inquired,

Whether more vigorous throve the Roman stock,
From prosperous quiet, or from adverse shock?
From adverse shock, be sure: thus Rome must stand;
When patriot love exclaims to guard the land,
When a loved wife's captivity alarms,
And violated hearths arouse to arms;
It fares with Romans, as with wasps, whose home
Is hung where Juno's temple rears its dome;
A bristling crowd, they wave their flickering wings,
Their yellow bodies barb'd with quivering stings.
But not like wasps, thus tremblingly alive,
The bee, secure returning, haunts her hive;
Forgetful of the comb, by sloth opprest,
The swarm, the queen, die slow in pamper'd rest:
And this the sons of Romulus have found,
Sunk in the lap of peace, in long perdition drown'd.

Now pause my theme; but thou, oh Muse! to me
Best consolation; since, deprived of thee,
Not e'en to live were joy: beseech thee, tell,
If, as the Lydian fled, when Smyrna fell,
We so should roam? or, Goddess as thou art,
Some other hope, some last resource impart:

But my Calenus' eyes avert from Rome,
And turn him from his pleasant Sabine home.
I said; the gracious Goddess brief replied:
"Dear votary! cast thy upright fears aside;
Abhorrence hangs upon the tyrant's name,
And he shall perish from the Muse's fame.
Still Numa's laurel groves and founts are mine;
Egeria smiles with me, at this his vain design.
Live, and farewell: to this, thy plaintive strain
Of graceful sorrow, shall its praise remain:
Hark! to thy lays responds the Muses' quire,
And Rome's Apollo answers with his lyre."

STATIUS.

Age of Domitian.

THEBAID.

ACHILLEID, A FRAGMENT.

SYLVÆ, OR MISCELLANEOUS EFFUSIONS.

English Translators:

STEPHENS, HOWARD, LEWIS.

PUBLIUS Papinius Statius was a Neapolitan. He was the son of Papinius Statius, a writer of celebrity in prose and verse, but whose works are lost; and Agellina. He married Claudia, daughter of Claudius Apollinaris, and widow of a musician: a lady whom he records with fond admiration, in one of his poems, for her affectionate qualities and

literary taste. Having no son by Claudia, he adopted an infant whose untimely death is lamented by him in a tender elegy. He obtained the prize of poetry in the Alban games, on the subject of Minerva, three several times: in the contest at the Capitoline games, where the praises of Jupiter were celebrated, he was unsuccessful. His popularity is mentioned by Juvenal, in a passage which is considered by Lilius Gyraldus, in his historical dialogues on the Greek and Latin poets, as satirical: a notion which is justified neither by the passage itself, nor by the context of the satire.

All Rome is pleased, when Statius will rehearse,
And longing crowds expect the promised verse:
His lofty numbers with so great a gust
They hear and swallow with such eager lust.
But, while the common suffrage gain'd his cause,
And broke the benches with their loud applause,
His Muse had starved, had not a piece unread,
And by a player bought, supplied her bread.

Charles Dryden.

This player was Paris, a favourite of Domitian; and the piece alluded to was a tragedy called Agave, which is no longer extant.

Statius was occupied twelve years in the compo-

sition and revision of his Thebaid. His Achilleid was left a fragment at his death; which probably took place at Naples, as in a poem to Claudia he urges the wish to pass the remainder of his days there, in preference to Rome.

Statius was no less an admirer of Virgil than was Silius Italicus; and in the same manner celebrated his birth-day: but he seems, notwithstanding, to have been more cordially attached to Lucan, whom he eulogises in a birth-day poem.*

The cadence of his verse appears modelled upon that of Virgil; but he has copied from Lucan some of those gorgeous extravagancies in description, which the chaste judgment of Virgil would have rejected.

He is not, however, a servile imitator of either:

* In years of youth thou wakest the string,
Ere of his gnat could Virgil sing:
To thee shall yield rude Ennius' page,
And learn'd Lucretius' arduous, rage:
He that led Argo through the wave,
And he that forms transfigured gave:
Nay more—while Romans listening throng,
The Æneid's self shall venerate thy song.

Birth-day Festival of Lucan.

his poetry is stamped by a masculine vigour and originality, a rich and vivid imagination, and a strong sense of the pathetic. It is in the latter quality, and in the picturesqueness of circumstance which marks his imagery, that his merit must perhaps be sought: they who have usually decided on the character of Statius, have confined themselves to his efforts at sublimity; and have criticised him, with too sweeping a censure, as a bombastic and affected poet. He does not indeed seem entirely calculated to excel in epic poetry: his characters have little of very prominent interest; and, whether from this, or from some other cause, the Thebaid, notwithstanding the splendour or beauty of its parts, is, as a whole, languishing and heavy. The "Minor Poems" are marked with his characteristic tenderness of feeling, and delicacy of fancy.

STATIUS.

From the Thebaid.

HYPSIPYLE DISCOVERS WATER TO THE GRECIAN ARMY, CONFEDERATED AGAINST THEBES.

STUNG by dread thirst, the fainting warriors fail
Beneath their blazing shields and twisted mail;
With their choak'd jaws the parching heats begin;
Then, with the strength of fever, rage within.
With hard pulsation beats each labouring heart,
The blood clings sickly to each vital part,
And curdles in their veins. The crumbling ground
With steam of dusty vapour smokes around.
From the steeds' mouths no foamy droppings flow;
Champing th' unmoisten'd chain, and lolling low
Their bitted tongues, they spurn the guiding rein,
The rider's voice, and furious scour the plain.
The scouts explore, by mandate of the king,
Lycymnia's lake, and Amymone's spring.
Drain'd by the scorching heat the banks are dry,
Nor hope is left them from the showery sky.

As if through Afric's yellow dust they stray'd,
And where no clouds Syene's turrets shade.
Till, as decreed by Bacchus, midst the wood,
Hypsipyle before the wanderers stood,
In beauteous grief; though at her bosom hung
The nurseling infant, from another sprung;
The hapless babe, that call'd Lycurgus sire:
Though rude her locks, nor costly her attire,
Yet regal graces mark'd her lofty air,
And shone through all the bitterness of care.
Adrastus, awe-struck and admiring, stood;
Then thus: "Oh mighty Goddess of the wood!
Not thine the features of a child of earth,
And that chaste mien disowns a mortal birth:
Though not thy lips the freshening rill require,
Serene beneath the drought of polar fire,
Approaching nations ask thy generous aid!
Whether of Dian's train, a quiver'd maid,
Thou sought'st the bridal couch; or haply love,
Since Grecian nymphs have touch'd the breast of Jove,
Slid in thy bosom from the starry spheres,
And thus the mother in the bride appears;
Behold these mournful bands: a righteous cause
Gainst Thebes the sword of keen destruction draws;

Yet, by unwarlike doom, to thirst a prey,
Our hearts are sunk, our vigour wastes away.
Assist our sufferings in this faint extreme;
If mantling pool be thine, or turbid stream:
We scorn no meanest solace to our woe,
To us no waters can polluted flow:
To thee, our present Jove, we raise the prayer,
For cooling rain, and soul-refreshing air:
Recruit our ebbing strength; oh! nerve again
Our languid bosoms for th' embattled plain!
If favouring stars o'er this thy charge preside,
And guardian Jove my steps returning guide,
What booty of the war shall then be thine!
Dircæan flocks shall bleed before thy shrine:
Due victims for the number'd host be paid,
And thy vast altar deck the forest shade."

He said, and while he pray'd, the accents hung
On his hot breath, and dry and faltering tongue.
Alike the rest were seen, in faintness pale,
With hanging jaws, that gasp'd to drink the gale.
The Lemnian queen awhile in modest pride
Bent on the earth her looks, and soft replied:

" Howe'er descended of celestial line,
Why am I honour'd with a name divine?
No Goddess I, and would I ne'er had known
Woes more than mortal, doom'd to me alone!
This nurseling in my childless arms I bear,
A stranger's pledge, entrusted to my care:
If on some bosom my loved babes repose,
If for my own the balmy nurture flows,
Is known to heaven: yet mine was regal sway;
A father famed—but why this fond delay?
Why linger I to show the wish'd-for flood?
Come, tread my steps, and search the secret wood.
If haply still the Langian brook retains
Its living tides; when rapid Cancer reigns,
Or the keen dog-star lightens from on high,
That wave flows on, nor feels the scorching sky."
Then, lest her cumber'd footstep, as she led,
Retard the chiefs, who follow'd on her tread;
Ah! hapless innocent! by Fate beguiled,
On a soft turf she lays the clinging child,
Where pillowing flowers in fragrant tufts arise,
And his soft tears with fondling murmurs dries.

So Cybele the infant Thunderer laid;
With trembling watch her Cretans guard the shade:
In rival strife they beat the timbrels round,
While Ida's glades with infant screams resound.
Meantime the boy, amidst the herbage deep,
Reclined on vernal earth, essay'd to creep,
With downward face, self-striving as he lay,
And trail'd through yielding grass his lengthening way.
Now craved with asking cry the balmy breast,
Now, brightening into smiles, his cry suppress'd;
Now with soft lips in lisping stammerings strove;
Now startled at the noises of the grove:
Or pluck'd the flowery stems that near him lay,
Or with round mouth suck'd in the breath of day.
Nor dream'd of dangers lurking in the shade,
But full of life, secure and careless, stray'd.
Such infant Mars, where Thracia's mountains rose,
Press'd with his hardy limbs th' encrusted snows:
Such Love, a winged babe, was seen to lie
On turfy hills of pastoral Arcady;
Or young Apollo, in his frolic wile,
Roll'd on th' imprinted sands of Delos' isle.

They track the thickets, wandering far and wide,
Through the green glooms, that arch on every side:
Outstrip their guide; or in compacted throng,
Impatient following, pour at once along.
She, in the midst, the secret pathway traced,
Though hastening, yet majestic in her haste.
The dell's hoarse echo speaks the river near;
And pebbly murmurs strike the thrilling ear.
First in the van, glad Argus shook on high
The standard-staff; and "water" was the cry.
From rank to rank the flying sound was flung,
And shouts of "water!" burst from every tongue.
So while the vessel shoots th' Epyrian shores,
The helmsman's voice, amidst the dash of oars,
Proclaims Leucadia's height, with sunshine crown'd,
And the shrill rocks with answering shouts rebound.

Impetuous to the stream they rush'd along,
Confused and mix'd; the leaders and the throng:
Alike their thirst, alike they cowering clung
To the cool banks, and o'er the waters hung.
Plunged with their ears the bitted horses flew,
And their mail'd riders 'midst the current drew.

The whirling eddy and the slippery rock
Betray their footing in the heedless shock:
The kings too strive; all forms of reverence lost;
Borne down by hampering crowds, in whirlpools tost:
The friend, in watery hollows plunging, tries
To raise his head, with unregarded cries:
The chafed waves flash; the stream slow-lessening sinks,
And, distant from its feeding fountain, shrinks:
The glassy waters, that were seen to glide
With greenish clear transparency of tide,
Discolour'd mantle in their troubled bed;
The crumbling banks with grassy ruin spread
The muddied stream: yet still their lips they lave,
And slake their hot thirst in the slimy wave.
Such was the scene, as if the battle raged,
And the set combat in the stream were waged:
As if the warrior press, that stem'd the flood,
On some fair city's conquer'd turrets stood.

81537

DEATH OF THE INFANT ARCHEMORUS.

THUS to the Grecian kings, in plaintive grief,
The Lemnian exile gives her woes relief:
Her absent nurseling now forgotten lies;
Such the decree of adverse Destinies.
Plunged in the crested grass, that round him rose,
His drooping eyes slid languid in repose:
Long wearied with the feats of childish play,
One hand still grasp'd the herbage as he lay.
When lo! a serpent, floating many a rood,
Uprose; the sacred horror of the wood.
Th' enormous snake dragg'd on each loosen'd fold;
Another self behind him lengthening roll'd:
With torch-like glare his livid eyeballs glow'd,
And his green jaws with foaming venom flow'd.
In triple barb he fork'd his quivering tongue;
In triple rows his jagged fangs were hung;
His towery crest a cruel glory shed,
And gilded radiance darted round his head.
The rustics deem'd him holy; for the grove
Was sacred held, the care of Argive Jove:

To whom turf altars rose amidst the shade,
And humble swains unwealthy honours paid.
Thus wreath'd in many an orb, with wandering train,
Glided the serpent round the sylvan fane;
With bruising folds the groaning woods were twined,
And the vast elms their mouldering bark resign'd.
Oft with continuous sweep he stretches o'er
The river-bed, and rolls on either shore:
Cut by his scales the middle waters flow,
Cleave as he glides, and hiss and froth below.
But now, when Theban Bacchus gives command,
And pants at every pore the burning land;
Now, when the water-nymphs, with dust bespread,
Hide in the lowest sands their fainting head;
Fiercer he writhes, untwists each winding spire,
And deadly rages with envenom'd fire.
Through the scorch'd pools he floats on many rings,
And roams in vallies, dried of all their springs;
Now, roll'd supine, he lies in faint despair,
And gasps for life, and licks the liquid air:
Now, grovelling prone, he smites the groaning ground,
And sucks for dew the verdant herbs around.

His breath's hot blast the drooping herbage dries,
And at his hiss the verdure withering dies.
Vast as the starry serpent, that on high
Tracks the clear ether, and divides the sky,
And, southward winding from the northern wain,
Shoots to remoter spheres its glittering train;
Or vast as that, whose agonizing fold
On cleft Parnassus' trembling summits roll'd;
As with drawn bow the Delian archer stood,
And writhed with hundred wounds he lash'd the reedy wood.
What God, poor babe! with disproportion'd fate,
Crush'd thy small limbs beneath so vast a weight?
Dost thou, scarce breathing new existence, lie
The prey of this, thy giant enemy;
That thou may'st sacred rise in Grecian fame,
Worthy a sepulchre of mighty name?
The serpent's farthest fold unconscious press'd
The slumbering boy, and life forsook his breast.
Sleep fled his limbs with his expiring breath,
And his eyes open'd, but to close in death.
But, when those plaintive, faint, and dying screams,
Like murmurs indistinct of broken dreams,

Struck on her ear, Hypsipyle flew wild,
With bow'd and trembling knees to seek the child;
Assured of ill, she glanced her searching eye;
Her mind oppress'd with saddest augury:
Soft, in known phrase, she call'd him o'er in vain:
No voice replied; and on the grassy plain
Each recent track was lost, but 'thwart the way,
Coil'd in green rings the sluggish serpent lay;
Wound his wreath'd spires o'er spacious acres spread,
And on his sidelong folds reposed his head.
Woe-struck, and shuddering at the sight, she stood;
Her animated outcries pierced the wood.
Th' unstartled snake, immoveable, lay near;
The wailing clamours smote each Grecian ear:
The chieftain speaks, the fervid Arcas flies,
Spurs back his courser, and explains her cries.
But then, at length, the clash of gleaming arms,
The rush of men, the monster's rest alarms:
He rears his scaly neck: beside the way
A rock, the landmark of the woodland, lay;
Upheaved with straining strength, the ponderous stone
Fled from the grasp of bold Hippomedon,

Through the void air: with such a whirl is flung
The rocky mass from warlike engine swung;
Leaps 'gainst the jarring gates with shrill rebound,
And the strong bars with shattering crash resound.
But vain the nervous valour of his arm:
The slippery snake recoils in swift alarm,
And disappoints the blow; earth hollow rings;
With bent recoil th' entangled thicket springs.
"But not the stroke I aim shall widely glance,"
Cried Capaneus, and poised his beechen lance:
"Whether, the bestial tenant of the glade,
Thou haunt'st the gloomy terrors of its shade,
Or art, thyself, a God; and would, to me
Were granted that voluptuous victory!
Thou shouldst not scape, though on each serpent fold
A giant rear'd his mix'd and monstrous mould."
Through the wide jaws the quivering javelin fled,
Cleft the fork'd tongue, and pierced the crested head.
Through bristling scales the griding weapon stood,
Fix'd deep in earth, and bathed in sable blood.
As in the sudden pang the reptile roll'd,
Scarce the long anguish thrill'd th' extremest fold.

With rapid coil he writhes his volumes round
Th' implanted shaft, and draws it from the wound;
Then, measuring many a rood, with ponderous train
Glides to the dark recesses of the fane;
Beneath his patron's altars coil'd retires,
And, hissing forth his suppliant soul, expires.
Through Lerna's kindred lake low murmurings spread;
The Nymphs, that oft had crown'd with flowers his head;
The plains, where oft his gliding track was seen,
The Sylvan Gods, that haunt the woodland green,
Lamenting mourn: the Fauns indignant tear
The cane's green wreath, entwisted with their hair:
And Jove had grasp'd the thunderbolt on high,
And storms and clouds had mingled in the sky;
But this was milder wrath: the time to come
Reserved for Capaneus his fiery doom.
Yet now, a muttering thunder rocks the air,
And o'er the serpent's crest the lambent lightnings glare.

When now the place was from the serpent freed,
The hapless Lemnian coursed the lawn with speed;

She climb'd a rising hillock, and survey'd
The blood-drops sprinkled o'er the grassy glade:
Then, pale and desperate, hurried through the wood,
And, conscious, started at the deed of blood.
As falls the blazing thunderbolt from high
She fell, and dash'd her frame in agony;
Grovelling in anguish on th' empoison'd green,
At the first horror of that deathful scene,
No word she breathed, no trickling tear she shed,
But with sad kisses hover'd o'er the dead;
And sought with open lips and indrawn breath
The flying lingering life that warm'd the limbs of death.
Mar'd was the mangled visage; flay'd the skin;
The slender bones were starting from within:
With the fresh gore each fibre dew'd the ground,
And the whole frame was one continued wound.
So when the slow snake, with devouring jaws,
From oaken bough the feather'd nestlings draws;
The mother bird, returning, hovers nigh
The silent nest, and asks their chirping cry;
Bends o'er the lonely branch with shivering thrill,
And shakes the far-sought morsel from her bill:

While the loved tree betrays the marks of blood,
And the torn plumes are scatter'd through the wood.
Folding the mangled babe, the wretched fair
Staunch'd his dear wounds beneath her veiling hair;
Till, loosed by grief, her tongue dissolved in moans,
Speech found a vent, and words succeeded groans.
"Oh thou! whose image to my fancy smiled,
The living picture of my absent child;
Archemorus! sole solace of my pains;
Of my lost country; of my slavery's chains;
The glory of my shame! oh thou, my joy!
What Powers of evil could thy life destroy?
Whom, turning from the path, I left so late,
The track'd grass bending to thy wanton weight?
Where now those heaven-bright features? where are found
Those tongue-tied accents of imperfect sound;
Soft laughter, and dear murmurs, that from thee
Were fraught with meaning, though to none but me?
How oft of Lemnos would I weave the tale,
Of Argo speak, and all my fate bewail!
The lengthen'd plaint would steal thee to repose,
And lull thy slumbering eyes, and soothe my woes.

E'en now thy little lips had scarcely prest
The milky balm from this maternal breast;
Ah me! in vain the balm of life abounds;
Its drops fall mingled with thy bleeding wounds.
I feel the anger of the Heavenly Powers:
Oh dreadful presage of my midnight hours!
Oh vision'd terrors of the silent night,
When Venus frowning cross'd my wondering sight!
Why plead the Gods? ah wretched babe! 'twas I—
Fear I confession, when so soon to die?
'Twas I exposed thee thus to ruthless destiny.
What sudden frenzy could my brain oppress?
Of such a pledge how deep forgetfulness!
While on my country's fates I fondly hung,
While my own fame rose proudly on my tongue;
(Now Lemnos! are thy crimes atoned by me!)
Lo! this my faith, and this my piety!
Oh bring me, chieftains! to this deathful snake,
If I be honour'd for my kindness' sake;
Or plunge your falchions here, and quench my days,
Lest my sad childless mistress meet my gaze:
Though not to hers would yield my keen despair—
Shall I the miserable burthen bear

Back to the mother's breast? may earth first rend
Its dark abyss, and I alive descend!"
Thus raved the mourner, soil'd with dust and blood;
The mighty kings commiserating stood;
To them her silent looks impute the luckless flood.

From the Minor Poems.

TO HIS WIFE CLAUDIA,

ON HIS INTENDED RETIREMENT TO NAPLES.

SAY, why those gentle looks should changed appear?
Why hangs the cloud upon that forehead clear?
Is it, that thoughts of Naples move my breast,
And native fields invite my age to rest?
But wherefore sad? no wanton lightness thine;
Not to the cirque thy fond regrets incline,
Beat by the rapid race; nor shouts, that roll
From the throng'd theatre, pervade thy soul.
But the cool shade of life is dear to thee;
Joys undegrading; modest probity.
Whither could ocean's waves my bark convey,
Nor thou be found companion of my way?
Yes—did I seek to fix my mansion drear
Where polar ice congeals th' inclement year;
Where the seas darken round far Thule's isle,
Or unapproach'd recedes the head of Nile;
Thy voice would cheer me on. May that kind Power,
Who join'd our hands when in thy beauty's flower,

Still, when the blooming years of life decline,
Prolong the blessing, and preserve thee mine!
To thee, whose charms gave first th' enamouring wound,
And my wild youth in marriage fetters bound;
To thee submissive, I received the rein,
Nor sigh for change, but hug the pleasing chain.
Thrice, when the Alban laurel, wreathing, spread
Its glossy verdure round my shining head,
And Cæsar graced me with his sacred gold,
I felt thy joyful arms my neck infold:
Thy panting kisses to my garland clung;
And, when in vain my failing lyre I strung,
Vanquish'd with me, thy sorrows would reprove
Th' ungrateful frowns of Capitolian Jove.
And thou hast listen'd, with entranced desire,
The first rude sounds, that would my lips inspire;
Thy watchful ear would snatch, with keen delight,
My verse, low-murmur'd through the live-long night!
To only thee my lengthen'd toils were known,
And with thy years has my Thebaid grown.
I saw thee, what thou art: when late I stood
On the dark verge of the Lethæan flood:

When, glazed in death, I closed my quivering eyes,
Relenting Fate restored me to thy sighs:
Thou wert alone the cause: the Power above
Fear'd thy despair and melted to thy love.
And wilt thou now so near a road decline,
Or sigh to make my wish'd retirement thine?
Ah! where that truth, on known occasions tried,
That Latian, Grecian, heroines far outvied?
Penelope, (for what can love restrain?)
By her 'Ulysses' leave, had cross'd the main:
Ægiale and Melibæa pined,
And sad Laomedia, left behind:
Whom griefs, how wild! of a despairing love
To frenzy of a Bacchic virgin drove.
Nor less hast thou, to either husband, shown
The firm allegiance which thy heart has known.
So, while thy kindling recollections burn,
Thou seek'st a former consort in his urn:
So didst thou clasp his dust, and from thy heart
With groans lament that spouse of tuneful art.
That fondness now is mine; nor less thy care,
And soft affection does thy daughter share:

Her with such mother's love thy thoughts infold,
That ne'er her form has lost its bosom-hold:
Fix'd in the close recesses of thy breast,
By night, by day, upon thy soul impress.
Not so the Halcyon bird is seen to cling,
Close to its vernal nest with brooding wing:
Nor does the Nightingale her home embrace,
And breathe her life into her callow race.
Yet oh! in lone virginity consume
Her wasted leisure and unfruitful bloom.
But, elsewhere, shall the bridal torches flame,
Bright as her charms of mind and person claim.
Whether upon her arm the lute she lays,
And with her father's voice the Muse essays:
With quavering notes, that trill my verses, charms,
Or in dance-gestures winds her ivory arms:
Discretion with her genius chaste contends,
Her modesty her graceful art transcends.
And has not Venus tinged thy cheek with shame,
That no blithe babes should bring a mother's name
To this the rose of maids? for oh! believe,
Not Roman rites alone the spousals weave:

Not Rome alone illumes the torch of love:
A son shall hail thee in my natal grove.
Nor high Vesuvius' ridge with storm of fire
Has bade our city's trembling youth retire.
Fair stand the peopled towns: by Phœbus' fane
Auspicious graced, walls rose beside the main:
Puteoli spreads smooth its haven's sand,
And shores, the shelter of the world, expand.
Here Capua's streets with Rome imperial vie,
Where Capys fix'd his Trojan colony:
Near lies the native city of my love;
The mild soil Phœbus, by the guiding dove,
Show'd to Parthenope: the Syren Maid
Cross'd the wide seas, and here her Naples laid.
Hither I seek to bear thee: not my race
Springs from wild Lybia, nor from barb'rous Thrace.
Temper'd by breezy summers, winters bland,
The waveless seas glide slumbering to the land:
Safe peace is here; life's careless ease is ours;
Unbroken rest, and sleep till morning hours.
No courts here rage; no bickering brawls are known:
The laws of men are in their manners shown:
And Justice walks unguarded and alone.

Why the magnificence of structures trace,
The fanes, the colonnades of pillar'd space?
The rival theatres; this vaulted high,
And that unroof'd and open to the sky?
The five-year games, that in their pompous round,
With Capitolian lustres vie renown'd?
Why praise Menander's scenes? his easy strain,
Transfused with Rome's free grace and flowing vein?
Nor less the various charms of life are found
Where the wide champaign spreads its distant bound:
Whether thou haunt warm Baiæ's streaming shore,
Or the prophetic Sibyl's cave explore:
Or mount, made famous by Misenus' oar:
Or Gaurus' vineyards, or the Caprean isle,
Where sailors mark the watch-tower's moony pile:
Surrentum's hills, where acrid clusters twine,
And where my Pollius dwells, and tends the vine:
Ænaria's healing lakes; and from the main
The rocks of Statina emerged again.
A thousand pleasures could my verse expand,
And darling loves of this my native land;
But now enough; my wife!—enough is sung:
Ah! from this soil thy destined husband sprung;

Link'd to thy lengthening years; thy bosom's guest;
Shall we not both be nurtur'd in its breast?
But I unkindly lengthen out the line
That dares mistrust a nature soft as thine:
Yes—thou wilt come; oh consort! dearest! best!
Nay—eager spring before my fond request:
Thou Tyber's aqueducts wilt loathing see,
And scorn Quirinus' roofs, bereft of me.

TO SLEEP.

Ah sleep! serenest God! what crime is mine,
That I, the only youth, at thee repine?
Now the hush'd calm and stillness of repose
O'er fold, and nest, and lair of woodland grows;
The tree-tops curve their boughs in imaged sleep;
From the fierce torrents alter'd murmurs creep;
The wave-ridg'd ocean falls its soften'd roar,
And seas, at rest, recline upon the shore.
Seven times the moon returns; yet pale, and weak,
Distemper sits upon my faded cheek:
Th' emerging stars, from Æta's mount that rise,
And Venus' fires have re-illumed the skies;
Still, past my plaints, Aurora's chariot flew;
Her shaken lash drop'd cold the pitying dew.
Can I endure? not if to me were given
The eyes of Argus, sentinel of Heaven:
Those thousand eyes that watch alternate kept,
Nor all o'er all his body waked, or slept.
Ah me! yet now, beneath night's lengthening shade,
Some youth's twined arms enfold the twining maid;

Willing he wakes, while midnight hours roll on,
And scorns thee, sleep! and waves thee to be gone.
Come, then, from them! oh leave their bed for mine;
I bid thee not with all thy plumes incline
On my bow'd lids; this kindest boon beseems
The happy crowd, that share thy softest dreams:
Let thy wand's tip but touch my closing eye,
Or, lightly hovering, skim, and pass me by.

Juvenal.

JUVENAL.

Age of Domitian.

SATIRES.

English Translators:

STAPYLTON, HOLIDAY, DRYDEN, GIFFORD, HODGSON.

DECIMUS Junius Juvenalis was born at Aquinum in Campania; and was distinguished at Rome by his eloquence at the bar. He was appointed by Domitian commander of a cohort, stationed at Pentapolis, a city on the frontier of Ægypt. This appointment was, in fact, only a milder mode of banishment; in revenge for some satirical strokes on the player Paris, the favourite of that emperor.

He returned to Rome, after the death of Paris, and died there, at an advanced age, in the reign of Trajan. He is said to have been of a large stature. His character, to judge from his writings, seems to be that of a man of sound principle, and a bold and fearless temper: conscious of moral uprightness in himself, and unsparing of the obliquity of others. It must, however, be confessed, that a passage in the 6th satire, v. 35, from the easy indifference with which it alludes to a custom of Roman depravity, certainly with no ironical meaning, would appear to indicate that he was, himself, not wholly untainted with the contagion of those manners which, in their general features of corruption, he had the sense to despise, the virtue to condemn, and the spirit to expose.

Juvenal is of the school of Persius. He is more diffuse, and declamatory than his master, but with no abatement of strength. His luxuriancy is in fruit, not leaves: the exuberance of a mind teeming with thought, and fertile in images. His vehemence is ever on the wing, and his ardour

never exhausts itself. His moral reflections, independently of their sublimity, are strikingly just and profound, and often rise above the level of mere philosophy. Yet his general usefulness, as a satirist, is limited by the grossness of his indelicacy, which is at least equal to the acerbity of his invective. No good can possibly arise from familiarizing the fancy with pictures of pollution, on which the impure imagination will dwell with a sensation very opposite to that of disgust; and which the mind that is pure cannot contemplate without losing some portion of its innocent simplicity.

JUVENAL.

CAUSES OF SATIRE.

FEEL we no gust, e'en in the public square,
To scrawl our tablets full; when, high in air,
Borne on six slavish necks, we see HIM ride
In open litter, seen on every side;
Lolling, Mecænas-like, in foppish pride;
Who forged a signature with pliant quill,
And simply interlined a scrap of will,
And press'd a deftly wetted seal,—to shine
In this smooth case, and in this ease recline?
Can I refrain, nor on my quarry prey,
When that rich matron sails across my way,
Who in Calenum's mellow wine instill'd
Toad's juice, and, busy, for her husband fill'd?
A new Locusta, willing to impart
To inexperienced wives the poisoning art;
And her fair neighbours teach to bear along
The livid husband's bier, through Rome's loud-babbling throng.

Dare something worthy of the dungeon-floor;
Or banishment to Gyara's rock-pent shore;
Dare this, or worse, if thou would'st great become;
For Probity is praised, and starves at home.
Gardens, pavilions, citron tables, plate
Of antique fashion and of massive weight;
Goblets emboss'd with goats; all, all their state
Is owing to their crimes: then who can think,
And let his eyes in midnight slumber wink?
That old seducer, who with gifts has won
The bride, the bride that wedded with his son:
Wives, of a species infamous to name,
And robed adulterers in their purple shame—
Mere indignation vents, in nature's spite,
Such boggling rhymes as I, or Cluvienus, write.
Down from the time, when storms raised high the deep,
And old Deucalion on the mountain steep
Moor'd his toss'd skiff, and at the tripod knelt;
When stones a breathing warmth, slow-softening, felt;
And Pyrrha show'd to man's enamour'd view
The naked maid; whate'er mankind pursue,

Hopes, fears, vagaries, pleasures, anger, joy,
Shall this, the medley of my scroll, employ.
When did a richer crop of vices wave?
Or when the bag of Avarice wider crave?
The gaming fever hotlier burn?—when they
Who haunt the table, for no purses play,
But the strong box is staked: the fight runs high,
While black-leg armour-bearers dice supply;
And are ye not stark mad a plum to lose,
Yet to your shivering slave a cloak refuse?

DEGENERACY OF FEMALE MANNERS.

WHY yes—in Saturn's golden age, I ween,
This Chastity full long on earth was seen.
When, in its narrow house, a rock-cold cave
To shepherd, flock, and fire a common shelter gave:
The mountain wife strew'd then her woodland bed,
With skins of neighbouring beasts, and leaves, and rushes spread.
No Cynthia she, no Lesbia, the dim tear
Flushing her bright eyes o'er a sparrow's bier:
But one, at whose broad breast a sturdy brood
Of giant infants hung, and suck'd their food:
Oft coarser than her spouse, who coarsely fed,
Of windy acorns gorged his daily bread.
On a new earth, beneath heaven's early blue,
The human race their fresh existence drew:
No parents rear'd them; but the quickening clay,
Or bursting oaks, had usher'd them to day.
Perchance yet many prints, or some, remain'd
Of modesty, when Jove succeeding reign'd:
But 'twas before Jove's beard was fully grown;
Ere perjuries of swearing Greeks were known:

None fear'd, lest thieves despoil their herbs or fruits;
And earth, their common garden, pour'd its roots.
Till slow Astræa took her heavenward flight,
And both the sisters bade the world good night.
Friend! 'tis old custom: 'tis of ancient date,
To shake a stranger couch with amorous weight,
And scorn the genius of the sacred bed;
All OTHER crimes the IRON age has bred;
The first adulterers, a precocious fry,
Were spawn'd, ere SILVER years had glided by.
Yet now, in these our times, thou darest to wed;
Thy marriage contract articled and sped:
A barber of first note has dock'd thy hair:
Thy ring, perchance, is sent th' affianced fair.
Why, thou art crazed: a wife? what madness takes
Thy sense, what Fury lashes with her snakes?
Need'st thou a mistress-wife, when ropes remain,
And windows, darkening sight, confuse the toppling brain?
What! would'st thou wed, when, near, th' Æmilian bridge
Yields to thy headlong neck its hanging ridge?

EMPTINESS OF AMBITION.

The spoils of war: a coat of mail, fix'd high
On trophied trunk, in emblem'd victory;
A dangling beaver from its helmet cleft;
A chariot's shiver'd beam; a pendant reft
From boarded galley; and the captive shown
On the triumphal arch in imaged stone;
Behold the sum of grandeur and of bliss!—
Greek, Roman, and Barbarian, aim at this.
Hence the hot toil and hair-breadth peril came,
For less the thirst of virtue than of fame.
Who clasps mere naked virtue in his arms?
Strip off the tinsel, she no longer charms.
Yet has the glory of some few great names
Enwrapt our country in destroying flames:
This thirst of praise and chissel'd titles, read
On stones that guard the ashes of the dead.
But a wild fig-tree's wayward growth may tear
The rifted tomb, and shake the stones in air;
Since sepulchres a human fate obey,
And vaults, that shrine the dead, themselves decay.

Try in the balance Hannibal: adjust
The scales: how many pounds weighs this big hero's dust?
This—this is he whom Afric would, in vain,
Coop 'twixt the tepid Nile and Moorish main:
Swarth Æthiop tribes his yoke of empire bore,
And towery elephants bow'd down before.
Spain crouches as his vassal; at a bound
He high o'erleaps the Pyrenæan's mound:
Nature with Alps and snows the pass defends;
Through juice-corroded rocks a way he rends,
And strides on Italy: yet nought is won;
He throws his glance beyond; "yet nought is done;
Till at Rome's gates the Punic soldier beats,
And plants my standard in her very streets."
Oh! how, in painting, would that form enchant!
That blinking hero on an elephant!
What is his end? oh godlike glory! say—
He flies in rout; in exile steals away:
A great and gazed-at suppliant, lo! he takes
His out-door station, till a monarch wakes.
Nor swords, nor stones, nor arrows gave the wound,
And crush'd the soul, that shook the world around;

What mighty means the blood-atonement bring?
Cannæ's avenger lurks within a ring.
Go! madman, scour the Alps, in glory's dream;
A tale for boys, and a declaimer's theme!
Lo! Pella's youth was cabin'd, cribb'd, confined
Within one world, too narrow for his mind:
Restless he turn'd in feverous discontent,
As if by Gyara's rocks, or scant Seriphum pent;
But brick-wall'd Babylon gave ample room;
Content he stretch'd him in a catacomb:
Death, death alone, the conscious truth attests,
What dwarfish frame this swelling soul invests.
They tell of Athos' mountain sail'd with ships;
Those bold historic lies from Græcian lips:
Of ocean bridged across with paving keels,
And harden'd waves o'erpast with chariot-wheels:
We pin our faith on rivers deep that shrank,
And floods which, at a meal, the Median drank:
And all that marvel-mongering poet sings,
That maudlin swan, who bathed in wine his wings.
Say how from Salamis this Sultan pass'd,
Who lash'd the Eastern and the Western blast;

Stripes, which they knew not in th' Æolian cave:
He, who with fetters bound th' earth-shaking wave,
And, in his mercy only, spared to brand?—
What! crouch'd a god, like Neptune, to his hand?
Then say, how pass'd he back?—behold him row
One bark, through bloody waves, with corse-choked
prow:
Such is the glorious fame for which we sigh,
And such ambition's curse, and penalty.

LEGITIMATE OBJECTS OF HUMAN WISHES.

SHALL man then nothing wish? advised by me,
Let the good Gods, themselves, consult for thee:
They what is useful, what expedient, know;
And for the pleasant, will the fit bestow.
Heaven loves us better than ourselves we love;
Our passions us with headstrong impulse move,
And blind desire: inflamed we pant to wed,
And hope for pledges from the fruitful bed:
But by the Gods, in foresight clear, are seen,
What the wish'd wife and hoped-for son had been.
Yet, that some rites of worship may be thine,
Some altar-offerings vow'd at holy shrine,
For a sane mind in a sane body pray;
A soul that looks on death without dismay;
That firm prepares the course of life to run,
And thanks kind Nature, when the race is done:
A soul that strenuous toils could never tire;
From anger calm; superior to desire:
That rather would th' Herculean labours prove
Than banquets, beds of down, and melting sloth of love.

I show thee that which needs not prayer to gain;
Which, of thyself, thou surely may'st obtain:
The path of tranquil life through virtue lies;
With prudence, thou hast all the Deities:
'Tis we, oh Fortune! who thy power have given;
Our weak desires have set thy throne in heaven.

IMPOTENCY OF REVENGE,

AND SELF-PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

"And shall no vengeance crush the perjured head?
Shall cheating infamy be fairly sped?"
Suppose him dragg'd in chains, and doom'd by thee,
What would resentment more? to the last agony?
Thy loss remains the same: th' entrusted ore
From faithless keeping will return no more.
Aye—but some ease, detested ease! hath sprung
From those poor blood-drops, which the rack hath wrung.
But is revenge a good? a joy more sweet
Than life itself? the vulgar this repeat;
Blind and untaught, whom burning anger draws
On slight occasion, and from groundless cause.
Not thus Chrysippus, or mild Thales taught:
Not thus the honied Sage of Athens thought;
Who, when in bonds, received the hemlock'd bowl,
Nor wish'd th' accuser part, but drain'd the whole.
'Tis blest philosophy, whose voice inspires
The upright tenor of subdued desires:

When error and gross vice the soul infest
She gently draws, and weeds them from the breast.
Know, where revenge has fix'd its firm controul,
There lurks a narrow and a feeble soul.
Thus, fitted to the weaker sex, we find
Revenge most pleasing to a woman's mind.
But wherefore dream, that safe the wicked speed,
Whose minds, aghast, are conscious of the deed?
The soul in silence shakes the scourge of sin,
And the slow torturer lurks and lives within.
Worse sentence never did Cæditius doom,
Nor Rhadamanthus frame beyond the tomb,
Than thus by day, by night, to bear along
The mute accusing evidence of wrong.

A Spartan once the Delphic counsel sought,
Ere yet the meditated fraud he wrought,
Withheld a pledge, or took a perjur'd oath;
But the bare doubt convicted him of both.
"No—not unpunish'd should the suppliant speed,
Who ask'd if Phœbus would approve the deed."
The Priestess said: the man, from terror's sense,
Restored the pledge, his morals the pretence.

But soon he verified the voice divine,
Prophetic utter'd from the secret shrine.
His children and himself were swept away,
And his ancestrial house fell headlong to decay.
Such punishments th' unwary wretch oppress,
Who acts, in thought, the will of wickedness:
The man, who frames the silent guilt within,
Incurs the crime of a committed sin.
What if the deed accomplish'd crown the will?
E'en at the social board care haunts him still:
His palate's fever-dried: in gobbets crude
Between his teeth th' unmasticated food
Grows with the grinding motion of his jaws
That ache to chew: the wine, his butler draws,
Though from Albania's growth the produce came,
And precious age matures it into fame,
Poor wretch! he spits, and sputters from his lips:
Present a mellower vintage, and he sips;
But straight such wrinkles furrow up his face,
Sour vinegar could raise no worse grimace.
If his sore mind at night a respite lend,
Thrown on the couch his limbs their length extend:

He slumbers; is at rest; but soon the fane,
The violated altars rise again:
And thee, whom he has wrong'd, whose memory still
Bids clammy sweat from his cold brow distil,
Thee, with deep mental horror dreaded most,
He sees thee rising like an angry ghost:
When, larger than the life, thy image seems
To hover o'er him in his troubled dreams:
From his closed lips th' unwilling murmurs wrest,
And drag the dark confession from his breast.

Yes—these are they who, pale with terror, glare,
When thunder rolls, and lightnings blaze in air:
Who, when the first low-muttering sounds have past,
In listening horror seem to breathe their last.
To them no chance of clouds—no rage of winds—
But angry vengeance flashes on their minds:
Harmless the gleam whirls by; the skies are clear;
Still o'er them hangs the panic weight of fear:
Lest but deferr'd the tempest's brighten'd gloom,
And the next storm should sweep them to the tomb.

Then, if their side with shooting anguish ache,
And their strain'd eyes in restless fever wake,

They deem the sickness mission'd from on high,
And these the stones and arrows of the sky.
No bleating lamb they to the chapel vow,
Nor to the household Gods devote they now
A crested cock; for can the wicked pray
In hope?—are lambs not worthier life than they?
How mutable and various still we find
The shifts and turnings of a villain's mind!
Bold when they sin; and when the sin is done,
Conscience grows wise; the terror is begun.
Yet nature to the censured crime recurs,
Stedfast to ill, and constant, when she errs.
Who by fix'd bounds could e'er his sin restrain?
When has the harden'd forehead blush'd again?
Or where the man, in this our virtuous time,
Who breathes content with but a single crime?

Dionysius Musicus.

DIONYSIUS.

Age of Adrian.

HYMNS.

THE commonness of the name has tended to bewilder conjecture as to the author of these hymns. Some suppose them to be nearly as ancient as the time of Pindar; and to be the composition of Dionysius, a poet and rhetorician mentioned by Athenæus, and commended by Plutarch: who was surnamed Chalceus, from his oration persuading the Athenians to the use of brazen money. Others ascribe them to Ælius Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a sophist and musician under Adrian, and author of a history of music; a conjecture which appears pro-

bable from the circumstance that the manuscript copies are accompanied by written music. The musical characters are probably coeval with the poetry; and credulity will scarcely assent to a written melody as old as the time of Pindar. The Hymn to Apollo however, from its splendid and solemn imagery, is worthy of the best age of Grecian poetry.

DIONYSIUS MUSICUS.

HYMN TO APOLLO.

Hush'd be all the space of air!
Mountains and woodland vales
Earth, sea, and rushing gales,
Echoes, and notes of birds, your sounds forbear:
Apollo comes: I see him nigh:
The God of flowing locks, the God of melody.
Father of morn! when, as her eyelids glow
Dazzling like the driven snow,
Thou gladden'd shakest thy locks of gold,
And drivest thy rosy car, whose wheels are roll'd
On foot-tracks light of winged steeds that fly
O'er the blue arch of yon unbounded sky:
Wreathed, as thou art, with many-circled beams
Thou pour'st abroad thy fountain-streams:
Thy fruitful splendour's flowing tide
Bathes the round earth on every side:
And rivers of immortal fire convey
From thee, its fountain-head, the lovely day.

The troop serene of stars on high
Where blue Olympus props the sky,
Confused in countless dance around,
Chorus full their host of sound:
Rejoicing ever, as they sing,
Oh Phœbus! to thy harp's symphonious string.
The azured moon majestic leads the quire
Of Seasons, dancing to thy lyre:
While in her car she journeys slow,
Drawn by heifers white as snow:
And her mild spirit feels thy gladdening ray,
While rolling on her many-winding way.

OPPIAN.

Aft. Ch. 211.

CYNEGETICS, OR HUNTING.
HALIEUTICS, OR FISHING.

English Translators:

DIAPER, JONES, MAWER.

OPPIANUS was a native of Anazarbus, a town of Cilicia, in the Lesser Asia; and was the son of Agesilaus and Zenodota. His father was a man of rank, and a philosopher; who, for his neglect in not going forth with the other chief men of the city, to meet the Emperor Severus, was by him banished to the island Melita, now Malta. Oppian accompanied him; and it was there that he com-

posed his poems. They are dedicated to Antoninus Caracalla, the son and successor of Severus. Oppian repaired to Rome, for the purpose of presenting them to that imperial monster: who, in some fit of good taste and proper feeling, granted his petition for the recall of his father from exile, and remunerated him with a piece of gold for every single verse: whence the poems acquired the name of "Oppian's Golden Verses." He returned to Anazarbus with his father, and died there of the plague, in his thirtieth year.

Oppian is perhaps more methodical and less digressive than any other didactic poet; and has all the minuteness of a writer of natural history. From these characteristics we might be led to expect more of scientific accuracy than of poetic genius; but Oppian has the fancy and the feeling of a genuine poet. His descriptions are full of life; his similitudes are remarkable for their striking aptness and originality; his style is splendid and emphatical, enriched with daring figures, and new and expressive combinations of language; and his versification is round and flowing. If, as a natu-

ralist, he sometimes deviates into romantic fables, it may be pleaded in his behalf, that both Ælian and Pliny are equally credulous.

OPPIAN.

From the Cynegetics.

THE HORSE.

THE grazier and the master of the race
Extoll the steed, whom these distinctions grace:
Let his rear'd head from towering neck arise:
Slender his legs, but ample be his size.
The cheek, soft-swelling to the neck decline
From the tall head; the brow expanded shine
With joyous breadth of space; and, tost in air,
Around his forehead curl the thickening hair.
Keen, fiery-glanced, and haggard-brow'd his eye,
Wide-mouth'd, wide-nostril'd, short his ears on high:
Let him his rough-maned neck inflected bear,
As the coned helmet bends its sweep of hair.
Oblong his body; broad his back and breast;
Double the spine, whose folds his ribs invest:

Let his full tail in length of hair descend;
Let muscles firm his well-knit thighs distend;
The shanks, below, strait, tapering, spare, and slim;
As those of antlered stags, that like the breezes skim:
His fetlock sloped; his hoof above the ground
High-rising; horny, solid, firm, and round.
Such let him dare the battles of the wood,
Of martial strain in spirit, speed, and blood:
My comrade of the field; and such we find
The Tuscan, Grecian, and Armenian kind;
And Cappadocians, that on Taurus bound,
A race of steeds for miracle renown'd:
Weak while soft-tooth'd, while milky flow his veins;
The steed, when old, his vigorous swiftness gains.
These may'st thou arm for mighty strife of blood,
These 'gainst the savage monsters of the wood.
Dauntless they rush, where bristling weapons wave;
The phalanx break; the martial lions brave.
How starts the war-horse, if at distance rang
The hollow trump with battle-stirring clang!
How does he bend his bold untwinkling eye
On legion spears, that flash against the sky:

With glare unfelt the brazen corslets blaze,
And steely lightnings tremble on his gaze.
He knows to stop, to charge, and conscious hears
The chief's loud signal with awakening ears.
Oft, tranquil, he confronts the hostile powers,
Entrench'd by walls, and imminent on towers:
When, overhead, th' assaulting ranks display
The shield-lock'd targets, as in wing'd array;
And form a seven-fold-hided plain on high,
Compact, with bosses bright, inwrought with imagery;
While, mounting to the storm, they scale the wall,
And doom, in sanguine hope, the city's fall.
Glanced from the brass the quivering sunbeams glare,
And rays, bent backward, flash their light in air.
To steeds has nature, with transcendant art,
Lent human feelings and a various heart.
They recognize their rider from afar,
And, neighing, hail the chief renow'd in war;
Or if, in death, he fall upon the plain,
They groan, lamenting, o'er their comrade slain.

THE ELEPHANT.

None of the forest kind so vast arise:
When swells the elephant before thine eyes;
Like some broad mountain's brow he spreads his form,
Or moves on earth, a cloud of blackening storm.
Of massive strength his bulky head he rears,
And smooth, and short, and concave are his ears.
Smaller his eyes than such a bulk demands;
Huge in the midst his nose projecting stands,
Curved, slender, lithe, as grasp of human hand.
This, his proboscis named, at will he wields,
As nature urges, and despoils the fields.
No like proportion in his feet we find;
Before he lifts them higher than behind.
Rough, dusky, thick, the skin his frame surrounds,
Which not hard iron's piercing sharpness wounds.
Fierce and untamed amidst the shady wood,
But mild with men, and of a gentle mood.
When midst the flowery lawns and hills he roves,
The beeches, olive-trees, and palmy groves

Are crash'd beneath him, as he sways around
His tusky cheeks, and roots them from the ground.
But man's strong hands the furious beast reclaim;
Lost is his anger, and his heart is tame.
He bears the yoke, his lips the curb obey,
Boys stride his back, and point his onward way.
The elephantine tribe, as fame has told,
With vocal organs murmur'd converse hold:
Not every ear the brutish voice can learn;
Alone the tamer may its sound discern.
This rumour too a miracle I deem,
That strongest elephants with prescience teem;
And, in their minds prophetical, await
Approaching death, and unresisted fate.
Not midst the birds alone, with last sad strain,
The swans, prophetic of their end, complain:
This thoughtful tribe of beasts, on nature's verge,
Themselves, with conscious bodings, groan their dirge.

TRAINING OF THE HOUND.

THE beast's faint track by two-fold search is found:
One mode the man adopts, and one the hound:
Men with their wily eyes trace close the ways;
Hounds with their nostrils thread the foot-mark maze:
To men the winter season timely proves;
When with unlabouring glance the huntsman roves:
When on the yielding snow, or miry clay,
The prints of feet their characters betray.
Hostile to hounds the spring; the autumn kind:
In spring the plants bud forth; and flowers are twined,
In fragrant tufts, o'er all the grassy ground;
And the wreath'd meads, unplough'd, blush purpling round.
The dogs, staunch-scented, as the paths they beat,
Lose the first scent in each succeeding sweet.
When autumn wanes, when yellow corn-fields shine,
And the sweet clusters ripen on the vine;
Then, odourless, herbs, plants, and flowerets fade;
The naked scent is winded in the glade.

A vigorous breed of hunting-dogs I praise;
Though small, yet not unworthy of my lays:
The body-painted Briton's training care
Has rear'd, and gaze-hounds is the name they bear.
Diminutive of size, as house-dogs, bred
To lick the plate, and from the table fed:
Crooked, and spare, and rough, and dull of eye;
But his arm'd feet their sharpen'd talons ply:
His mouth with close-set teeth is fenced around,
And his keen bite adds venom to the wound.
With truest nose the gaze-hound hunts the trail,
Tracks the faint prints, and notes the tainted gale.
To prove the whelp, we see some huntsman bear,
Through the high gates, a dead or living hare:
With serpentizing path he wins his way:
His crafty steps now straight, now crooked, stray:
Aright, aleft, he sidelong treads the ground,
With waving path, still twisted round and round:
Till, distant from the city gates, he hides
The hare in sunken pit; returns, and guides
The busy-searching hound beside the way;
He, snorting, springs upon the scented prey:

Seeks out the trail, nor soon detects the maze,
Though eager-nosed; but hot in ferment strays:
As some young maid, now first a mother, knows,
In the tenth moon, the labour's coming throes;
Spreads loose her hair, unclasps the broider'd zone,
That girds her breast; her tunic widely thrown,
Her veil cast off, disconsolate in woe
O'er the wide house she ranges to and fro;
And now while, fitful, grows the labour-pain,
Runs to the vestibule; and now again
The couch within her secret chamber seeks;
Moans, roll'd in dust, and rends her bloomy cheeks:
So, with devouring pangs, the hound, in air
His nostril raised, is hurried here and there:
Each path, hill, stone, in search successive tries;
Through hedge, through fallow, vineyard, thicket, flies:
Till, once the trail's aerial odour found,
He laughs in whimpering joy, and gambols round:
As the young calf exults with frisking feet
Around the cow, that struts with swelling teat:
So the glad spirit bounds in every vein;
Rushing, he courses in a ring the plain:

Nor can you turn him, though from far you chide;
He drives straight on; nor ever swerves aside:
Caught by the luscious odour, firm contends
To reach the goal, where now his labour ends.
Him if you match against th' unhunted hare,
Small-sized he creeps with ambush-lurking snare;
Plants, step by step, his feet; and stealthy speeds,
Hid by broad vines, or mask'd with bedded reeds:
E'en as the kid-stealer, with heedful eyes,
Creeps silent, where the goatherd slumbering lies:
Till, to the hare's close form approaching near,
He springs right onward like a darted spear,
Or hissing snake, by foot of reaper prest,
That shoots, late dormant, from her poisonous nest.
So springs th' exulting hound; and if he snare,
Swift caught with griping hold, the quaking hare;
He lifts him in his jaws; and brings the freight,
Panting for breath, and burthen'd with the weight.
As from the field the sheaves some waggon rears,
And seeks the village, piled with wheaten ears:
Blithe at the sight, in distant-gathering throng,
To meet the load the rustics pour along;

Hang on the groaning wheels, and aiding free
The team, and ease the lighten'd axle-tree;
Then, at the hamlet, loose the harness'd wain;
The labour-reeking oxen breathe again:
The waggoner's tired spirit smiles in glee:
So brings the hound his burthen pantingly:
So runs the active huntsman with a bound
To meet and welcome his returning hound:
Both from their mother earth he lifts in air,
And fondles on his breast the slaughtering hound,
and hare.

THE BEAR-HUNT.

MIGHTY the bear-hunt's fame, where Tygris flows,
And where Armenia vaunts her bended bows.
Midst the deep oaken glens of tangled shade
A numerous crowd, in foresight, track the glade:
Hounds bold and staunch of scent their steps pursue,
Hunting the wild beast's foot-marks in the dew:
On the fresh track they, closely following, trail;
Their oblong nostrils snuff the winded gale,
And, stooping, skim the ground: if backward lead
A new-found print, they laugh, and spring with speed,
And leave the former track; till, all the train
Unravell'd, they the leafy covert gain.
Straight from the huntsman's leash the hound would start,
With querulous bark, yet gladden'd at his heart.
As when the milkmaid roams, in spring's green hours,
Bare-foot, the mountain dells, to cull the flowers:
Though yet far off, the breath, that scents the gale,
Tells her of violets, bedded in the dale:

Blithe in her joy, her smiling heart sits light;
She roves, insatiable of sense and sight;
Tricks off her braided hair, and, singing free,
Trips to her rustic parents' hut with glee:
So joys the daring hound: the huntsman reins
His springing haste, and with a thong restrains.
Then, with a laugh, rejoins the hunter band,
And points the wood with signal-making hand;
And where himself and his companion hound
Had left the beast, their watchful wiles had found
The huntsmen fix their stakes, and nimbly set
The wide-spread meshes of the circling net.
Then, on those hills where groves of ash ascend,
Two men are posted at each distant end:
These keepers of the net's extremest line
Stretch from their weaker hand a lengthening twine
Of twisted flax: its height above the plain
May to the navel of the man attain.
The cord must wave with flowery garlands gay,
The glistening terrors of the beasts of prey.
Let thousand gaudy plumes suspended glare,
From painted wings of beauteous birds of air:

Vultures, that bright with jetty feathers glow,
And long-plumed cranes, and swans with plume
of snow.
Their right hand sets the snare, whose meshy surge
Floats underneath some precipice's verge.
At even spaces, next, they lightly spread
Green boughs, that thickening roof, like huts, their
head.
Four in each hut their ambush'd bodies throw,
And, buried in the foliage, lurk below.
Now all disposed with seemly care and art,
A clanging trumpet makes the forest start.
Leaps from her den the bear with yelling cry,
And, growling, glares with fierceness in her eye.
Close round the savage press the hunter rout,
With phalanx rush, with tumult, tramp, and shout.
She, starting from the throng, in giddy flight
Makes for the lawn, that opening gleams in sight.
They, with shrill halloo, wave the shaggy twine,
And agitate the many-colour'd line.
She sad, perplex'd, and stupefied with fear,
Bounds to and fro, and reels with deafen'd ear.

The crowd, the tramp, the shout, the horn assail,
The panic-waving cord, the whistling gale:
The feathery tufts, high-brandish'd to and fro,
And wings shrill-rustling, as the breezes blow.
Scared at the sight, the she-bear turns, and creeps
Where, opposite, the net ensnaring sweeps;
And tumbles in the toil: then forward spring
The youths that guard the net's extended wing:
Fall from above, with mesh on mesh surround,
And stretch the beast in corded labyrinth bound.
'Tis then the bears, with fury of the jaws,
Struggle in rage, and gripe with talon'd paws.
And oft the huntsmen, flying in dismay,
Have shunn'd the net, and, foil'd, foregone the prey.
Unless some stronger man, with slip-knot snare,
Noose the right paw, and thus unnerve the bear;
Bind with quick skill, and drag her, at her length,
To some tree's massive trunk: with struggling strength,
She round her body folds the twisting twine,
And winds in circles still th' imprisoning line.
He shuts his captive close: where, overhead,
Arch'd pines, or oaks, a vault of foliage spread.

From the Helieutics.

HARPOONING OF THE WHALE.

As arm'd for war the fishermen are seen,
With three-fork'd spears, strong darts, and falchions keen:
With pointed ox-goads, and edge tools that, beat
By clanging hammers, felt the forge's heat.
On board their well-deck'd skiffs they climb with speed,
By silent signs they help each other's need:
Cautious of noise, their quiet oars are plied;
The whitening sea foams gradual, as they glide:
Lest the vast whale, receding from the sound,
Plunge wary down the billow-swol'n profound,
And disappoint their toil: but now when, near
To the close conflict, they approaching steer,
Bold from the prow they cast into the flood,
To the huge fish, the wile of deadly food.
He, not unheeding, leaps, and gorges down,
With eager maw, the ponderous dainty thrown:

And, forceful springing, snatches, as they float,
The crooked fraud's barb'd points, that spear his ample throat.
Roused by the wound to wrath, he scornful draws,
With swaying motion, his destructive jaws;
And deems to burst the brazen thong in twain;
But all his persevering toil is vain.
Then, smit with fiery anguish, at a leap,
Sinks in the bosom of the whelming deep.
The fishers swiftly loose the lengthening line;
For the huge monster, tossing 'midst the brine,
None with the strength of man might drag to land,
Or train him, tamed, and struggling, to the strand.
Th' impetuous onset of the whale could sweep
Them and their deck'd shallops beneath the deep.
But bladders huge, with human breath upblown,
Tied to a cord, are 'midst the waters thrown,
As on the monster fares: who, chafed with pains,
The floating skins unheedingly disdains;
Yet swift attracts them, while, deprest in vain,
They buoyant strive above the foamy main.
He now just touching on the ocean sands,
In foaming torture intercepted stands:

And as a horse, now nearing to the goal,
While down his limbs the toilsome sweat-drops roll,
Champs on the crooked bit, in foam and gore,
And a hot smoke his breathing nostrils pour,
So, with deep pants, the whale reposes spent,
And fain would rest; the bladders rest prevent;
With mounting swiftness underneath him leap,
Upborne with wind, and buoy above the deep.
He, thus compell'd an added war to wage,
On the receding bladders wreaks his rage,
With empty force; they, flitting, backward flee,
Like living things, light-skimming o'er the sea;
He raging borne amidst the deeps again,
Is roll'd among the whirlpools of the main:
Dragging or dragg'd; now willing, now perforce,
The waters whelm him, in alternate course;
As woodcutters, in common labour, draw,
To frame some keel, th' accelerated saw;
Both, to and fro, with backward motion sway'd,
Urge the rough force of its infixed blade;
Two several ways the teethy range is plied,
And breaks, and cleaves the wood, from side to side;

Thus driven, repell'd, from side to side inclined,
The monster buffets with the skins of wind.
Chafed with his pains, he spouts above the flood
Volumes of scatter'd foam, commix'd with blood;
With blast of hollow sound his nostrils blow,
In bubbling rage, the gurgling surge below;
And, all around him, gather'd in a heap,
Groan the swoln billows of the weltering deep.
So strong the workings of his breath, it seems,
That, in the depth of ocean's swelling streams,
The northern wind in struggling ambush lay,
Breathed his whole blast, and heaved the watery way.
The whirling waves their rolling eddies urge,
And wide asunder leaps the hollow'd surge:
As Tyrrhene seas, which fractured rocks restrain,
Roar in the strait, when some wild hurricane
Lashes th' Ionian bay; the eddy sweeps,
Curling the rapid wave, along the deeps;
Dark foams the whirlpool in its gulfy round,
And, rushing strong, the refluent tides rebound:
So where the whale's tempestuous blowings breathe,
The troubled sea, deep-eddying, rolls beneath.

Then his scoop'd bark some fisher active rows,
And to a rock the line affixing throws;
Then swift returns: so chaining hawsers bind
The ship's tall poop to some steep shore confined.
The weary monster, restless, beats the main,
Now dizzy with intoxicating pain:
His heart's fierce spirit, bow'd by labour, fails,
And hateful death hangs trembling in the scales.
The first returning bladder, that proclaims
Conquest's wish'd end, their swelling breasts inflames.
As when, from anguish-teeming fields of fight,
Returns the herald clad in robes of white;
While his blithe looks th' expectant crowd employ,
They press to hear the messenger of joy;
So these the wind-inflated skin descry,
With glad return announcing victory.
Straight other bladders from the deeps emerge,
And train th' enormous fish along the surge;
Reluctant drag'd, the hurtful monster bounds,
But vex'd with toil, and faint with wildering wounds.
The fishers rouse their daring souls, and nigh
Their well-oar'd barks with strokes impetuous ply;

Mix'd clamours from the chafing deeps arise
Of deep-breathed panting haste, and animating cries.
The scene of hot commotion, view'd from far,
Would seem the toil of men array'd in war;
Such is the strength of heart, the strenuous might
Such the loud din, and such the zeal of fight.
Their hoarse-resounding clamour fills the gale;
Some shepherd feeding in the distant vale
His woolly flock or goatherd, starts to hear;
Or hunter of the forest holds his spear;
Or woodman, as his axe the pine-tree fells,
Astonish'd listens in the mountain dells:
Then to the shore and sea approaches nigh,
Stands on a hanging cliff, and bends his eye
O'er all the ocean strife and venturous toil;
And marks the capture of the dreadful spoil.
The watery combat's unextinguish'd rage
Impels them all; all eager to engage:
Some in their grasp the three-fork'd javelin rear,
Some the curved falchion, some the sharpen'd spear,
Some two-edged ox-goads aim: all striving stand;
An iron weapon arms each active hand.

Around the beast, with many a forceful blow,
They wound, they strike, they darted weapons throw:
Forgotten his enormous bulk, in vain
His jaws would drive, and scatter o'er the main
The rushing barks; though, as with foamy sweep,
And with lash'd tail, he ploughs the briny deep,
He on their sterns the tossing vessels throws,
And hands and oars with fruitless strength oppose,
And back recoil: as if an adverse blast
Full 'gainst the prore the rolling billows cast.
They shouting urge their eager toil the more;
The universal surge is stain'd with gore;
From deathly wounds immensely glows the flood,
Its azure surface blushing red with blood.
As from red cliffs the wintery torrent sweeps,
The tinge of blood its foaming channel steeps;
The moist discolouring soil, with cataract force,
Is roll'd along the river's whirlpool course;
Redden with tawny sand the waters wide,
And gore seems mingling with the ocean tide:
From the spear'd fish so spreads the path of blood,
And the fresh wounds run purple o'er the flood.

Themselves the dashings of the spray instil
In the wide wounds; the brine assists to kill.
The hurtful monster feels, like burning fire,
The mingled salt; and hastens to expire.
As when the stroke of Heaven with forky blaze
Smites some tall ship, that skims the ocean ways,
The vessel splits beneath the lightning's force,
And flames and billows urge it on its course:
So does fierce ocean's mortifying surge,
With strongly scented brine, his tortures urge,
And goad his every wound; now quell'd he lies,
Foredone with many-mangling agonies;
Fate shortens now the ebbings of his breath,
And leads him to the threshold of his death.
The cord, affix'd to land, the monster trails,
Loth-struggling, pierced with javelins, as with nails;
Reeling, he welters on the watery plains,
And rolls, inebriate, in his dying pains.
They, shouting, carol the triumphal song,
And, in shrill chorus, row their rapid skiffs along.
As when, the sea-fight done, the victor band
Chain fast the captured ships, and row to land,

With all the hostile crew, the strokes of oars
Chime with their songs, and echo round the shores;
The captive foes, reluctant, track their way,
And mourn perforce the fortune of the day:
So they, rejoicing, drag with cords to land
The vast sea-monster, wallowing on the strand.
But, when to solid earth approaching nigh,
He then first feels the sore extremity,
He pants and heaves; and, shower'd on either side,
Shakes from his horrid fins the briny tide.
As the fleet bird around some altar flies,
Hovering in dizzy rings, and drops and dies.
Ill-fated one! he surely longs again
To launch into the bosom of the main;
But all unnerved his strength; his frame no more
Obeys; he gasps, and grovels on the shore:
E'en as a ship of burthen, lofty, wide,
Of numerous decks, is drawn from ocean's tide
High on the shore, when wintry tempests yield
A breathing respite from the watery field,
Hard toil the mariners: the fisher band
Thus striving drag th' enormous whale to land.

O'er all the shore his prostrate bulk is spread,
Outstretch'd in death, a spectacle of dread.
A hideous corse, extended on the sands,
The scared beholder still at distance stands,
And shudders at the slain, and shrinking draws
A secret horror from his tusky jaws:
Till, bolder grown, the gathering throng surveys
The ravening fish with wide astounded gaze.
In some his sharp-fang'd cheeks arouze their fears,
Barb'd in a triple row like threatening spears;
Some touch the wounds, that rain'd from iron blows
On the huge monster midst the aiming foes:
Some mark his sharpen'd spine with wondering eyes,
Where bristles, starting in their terrors, rise.
Others his tail, his head immense, survey,
And his vast belly gaping for its prey.
Haply, some tenant of the inland plain
May look upon the monster of the main,
And, turning to his near companions, say,
"Thou, friendly earth! hast nursed me many a day;
And fed me from the ground: when death is nigh,
Within thy pleasant borders let me die.

Propitious prove the sea; while, safe on shore,
I the dread Godhead of the waves adore.
Ne'er may I float on slender plank, consign'd
To the wild perils of the wave and wind;
And in the vapoury atmosphere inhale
The mist of clouds, and breathe the gusty gale.
But not so fearful seems the rolling wave,
Or sore sea-hardship which the seamen brave;
Who still with hoarse-resounding storms contend,
And, as on pawing steeds, the waves ascend;
No—not enough the seamen's watery fate;
Yet more; themselves the banquet, they await
These dreadful entertainers, and their doom
The grinning jaws of fish, a living tomb.
Nurse of such woes, I dread thee, awful sea!
Hail from the distant shore! be mild to me!"

NEMESIAN.

Aft. Ch. 281.

CYNEGETICS: OR ON HUNTING.
FRAGMENT OF A POEM ON BIRD-CATCHING.
ECLOGUES.

MARCUS Aurelius Olympius Nemesianus was a native of Carthage, and flourished under the emperor Carus, and his sons Carinus and Numerian. He was a great favourite in the eighth century, particularly in the time of Charlemagne, when he was introduced into the schools as a regular classic. His poems were recovered by Sannazarius, the celebrated author of the Piscatory Eclogues, who found them in the Gothic character, and had them transcribed fairly into the Roman.

Nemesian, from the judgment which the muti-

lated state of his poems enables us to form, has no pretensions to the bold creative genius of Oppian; and, as an imitator of Virgil, he must yield the place of invention to Gratius: but he is superior to the latter in the grace and rapidity of poetical detail, and in the perspicuity and sweetness of a flowing and easy style. His eclogues please, notwithstanding the triteness of amabæan pastoral, by their elegant diction, and harmonious numbers; by the air of impassioned tenderness which they breathe; and by their lively and natural images.

NEMESIAN.

CHOICE OF HORSES,

AND METHOD OF SNARING BEASTS.

THE courser chuse from Greece; or let thy steed
Show the high blood of Cappadocia's breed.
While all his sires the palms of conquest grace,
Fresh in the generous annals of the race.
O'er his sleek back a breadth of space appears;
With belly short, and length of side, he rears
A lofty crest, and keen and trembling ears.
His graceful head is ever held on high;
A flitting splendour glances from his eye:
From his strong shoulders see his neck ascend,
Ample, erect, with backward—bridling bend:
In humid cloud the smoky vapour flows
From his red nostril, breathing as it glows.
His foot shifts restless with impatient bound,
And his horn'd hoof, redoubling, beats the ground.

High boils the courage of his generous strain,
And his bold limbs exhaust themselves in vain.
Beyond steep Calpe's rocks a noble breed
Is rear'd, midst champaigns fertile in the steed,
With lengthening course far-stretching o'er the mead.
Nor these in shape of limbs are seen to yield
To the famed steeds of Grecia's teeming field.
Thus terrible their nostril burns to sight,
And rolls the vapour of its breathing light.
With glancing orbs their vivid eye-balls turn,
Their shrill neigh trembles, and the rein they spurn;
Nor their quick ears to sluggish rest command,
Nor ease their legs that quiver as they stand.
Let Afric's region send another steed,
By dam and sire, confest of native breed;
Whom tends the dusky Moor on desert plains,
And, patient, to assiduous labours trains.
Nor yet repent th' uncouthly shapen head,
Disfigured belly, and a mouth unbred
To feel the rein; that horse and rider wheel'd,
In savage liberty, the Moorish field;

Or that his matted mane disorder'd lies,
And scattering beats his shoulders as he flies.
A pliant rod with easy stroke may guide
His neck, that wantons in unbridled pride;
A stroke impells to flight, a stroke restrains;
Thus pours he swift along the opening plains,
The quicken'd blood warm-bounding in his veins:
Gains, as he springs, accelerated force,
And leaves his rivals distanced in the course:
So rush the gales o'er Ocean's azure wave,
When Boreas, rising from his Thracian cave,
Roars to th' affrighted waters: sudden sleep
All other blasts along the troubled deep;
With foaming murmur on the billow's verge
He rears his head, and overtops the surge:
With wandering gaze the Nereid throng survey
The airy stranger tread the watery way.
Slow, in the lengthen'd chase, the Moorish steed
Acquires the daring confidence of speed.
But when, in service spent, his youth declines,
Not with his youth his vigour he resigns.
The spirit of his prime remains the same,
And only sinks to ruin with his frame.

Feed, in the spring, with mash of mingled grain,
The old and jaded horse, and breathe a vein;
And in his springing blood dark spots survey,
The stains of ancient toils that pass away.
Then cheering strength shall knit his swelling breast,
And his sleek limbs distended nerves invest.
The blood then purer glows along his veins;
He scours a length of space, his flight consumes the plains.
When blades, that soft with milky moisture flow
In ripening stalks, by summer harden'd grow;
When burning heat the yellow harvest dries,
And, arm'd with spikes, the bristling ears arise:
Light straw and barley to his rack be borne,
And sift from chaffy dust the purer corn.
With smooth-rub'd loins permit the steed to stand,
And feel the pleasure of thy clapping hand.
Through his glad frame, relax'd, the juices play,
And healthful balm along the lungs convey.
This heedful task the youthful hunt may share,
And, high in spirit, urge the rival care.
The same may weave the hunters' toils, and set
The trailing snare, and sweeping length of net.

At widen'd distance twist the knotted twine,
And square each mesh of the tenacious line.
The toil that should round lawn and forest spread,
Hemming the nimble prey in moveless dread,
Must with inwoven plumes its threads divide,
From every various wing diversely dyed.
This the keen wolf and flying stag shall scare,
The fox, the monstrous boar, and shaggy bear;
As if with lightning flash, aghast, confound,
And still forbid to pass the checquer'd bound.
This then with various paint, anointing, smear;
Let florid hues with snowy white appear
And lengthen on the threads th' alternate fear.
A thousand terrors from his painted wings,
To aid thy enterprise, the vulture brings.
The swan, the goose, the crane, and each that laves
His webbed feet amid the stagnant waves.
Creatress of the mightiest birds of air,
Warm Afric shall her feather'd tribute bear:
Then rarer plumes shall brighter tints bestow,
Where scarlet deepens in its native glow:
Where flights of birds on blooming pinions rise,
And plumage reddens with its saffron dies,
Or streaks in green its pied varieties.

Thy gear complete, when autumn's end is near,
And showery winter overhangs the year,
Begin: your hounds unkennel in the mead;
Begin; o'er champaign fields impel the steed.
Hunt, while the daybreak sheds its glimmering light,
And the fresh dews retain the scented tracks of night.

ECLOGUE.

THE beauteous Donace young Idas fired;
Young Alcon, too, the boyish flame inspired;
For Donace their rude unripen'd age
Rush'd into love, and burn'd with amorous rage.
Her they surprised, as in a neighbouring vale
She fill'd her lap with bearsfoot's winding trail
And garden flowers; though each an unform'd boy,
Each then first cull'd the stealthy kiss of joy.
Love, thence, on either stripling's bosom steals,
With such warm hopes as no mere stripling feels.
For o'er their heads now fifteen summers glide,
And conscious youth exacts a sprucer pride.
When Donace no more was let to roam,
By her hard parents close confined at home:
For less in treble key her voice is heard,
And thick and husky sounds each muffled word:
Bridling erect her neck, and full her veins;
While the quick blush her cheek suffusing stains.
Then seek the youths, with sweetly plaintive art,
To ease the burning fever of their heart.

Both match'd in years, in song, in feature fair;
Both smooth of cheek, with loosely flowing hair,
Sooth'd their hard hap beneath th' o'ershadowing plane,
While Idas piped and sang to Alcon's vocal strain.

IDAS.

Nymphs of the grots, and Dryads of the woods,
And marble-footed Naiads of the floods!
Who the moist grass with wounding tread explore,
And cull the flowers that fringe the purpled shore,
Say, where is Donace? what bowering shade
Conceals, or in what meadow strays the maid,
The whilst her rose-tip'd fingers lilies braid?
Thrice drop'd the sun within the western sea;
Still, in th' accustom'd grot, I wait for thee!
And here, as if their sympathetic woe
Could soothe my love, or calm my fever'd glow,
Three days of lingering light my heifers pass,
Nor sip the rilling brook, nor browze the grass.
In vain the milkless teat the yeanlings drain,
The air with soften'd lowings rings in vain,

And I no more, to press the curds, have twined
Baskets of yielding rush, or withy soft of rind.
Why tell to thee what thou so well hast known?
Thou know'st a thousand heifers are my own:
Ne'er empty stood my pails, but for this love alone.
I am that Idas, Donace! whom, soft,
Thy intercepting lips have kiss'd so oft
In the mid-tune; thy lips, the while I play'd,
Have sought my own, as o'er the reeds they stray'd.
Ah! feel'st thou not some anxious fond regret?
Pale as the box tree, or dim violet,
I wander forth: from food, distasteful, turn,
And my own vintage in the goblet spurn.
Nor memory notes when last my languid head,
Resign'd to slumber, press'd the wonted bed.
Wretch that I am! behold, deprived of thee,
Dark is the lily, wan the rose to me;
No fragrant leaf the bay, the myrtle wreathes,
Nor blushing hyacinth its odours breathes.
Come thou! but come, the rose again shall glow
With crimson flush; the lily shine like snow;
Its fragrant leaf the bay, the myrtle wreathe,
And blushing hyacinth its odours breathe:

And long as Pallas loves the brown-leaved wood,
Where the green berry swells with oily flood,
While Pales meads, and Bacchus owns the vine,
The heart of Idas, Donace! is thine!

Thus Idas piped: oh Phœbus! teach my strings,
Since golden verse is thine, how answering Alcon sings.

ALCON.

Oh mountain Pales! Sylvan, God of groves!
Pastoral Apollo! and, oh queen of loves,
Dione! that, with influence bland, from high,
Throned on the rocks of this our Sicily,
Minglest the melting lovers' fervid sighs,
And bind'st through ages the connubial ties!
What have I done that Donace should flee?
For not in gifts could Idas vie with me.
I brought a nightingale, that warbled long
Breathless divisions of his murmur'd song;
Through the small wicket of his willowy dome
Released he flies, and freely feigns to roam
Hovering 'midst rustic birds; then flutters to his home.

Within his house of twigs content to dwell,
And to wide woods prefers his wicker'd cell.
And, what I could, the booty of the groves,
A gentle hare I sent, and turtle doves:
And, after this, does Donace despise
My tender passion, and reject my sighs?
Haply, the rustic Alcon meets your scorn;
Who drives the herds afield at break of morn;
Yet Gods have fed their flocks; the truth declare
Skill'd Pan! prophetic Fauns! and Phœbus fair!
And soft Adonis Cytherea's care!
At peep of glimmering dawn, I bent to trace
In mirror'd fountain my inverted face:
Ere yet the Sun had lift his purple beam,
Or liquid splendour trembled on the stream:
I saw, distinct, my cheek reflected there,
As yet unfledged with down, and smoothly fair.
I cherish too my locks; the peasants all
Me far more charming than our Idas call:
This you would say, and praise with blithe delight
My cheek of scarlet and my neck of white,
And manly-ripening form, and eyes of gladsome light.

Nor yet unskill'd my lips the pipe explore,
I breathe the reed, which Gods have breathed before;
Which Tityrus erst waked sweetly into voice,
Who left the woods, and made imperial Rome his choice.
We too in Donace's enchanting praise,
Amidst the city will our descant raise;
If 'midst coned cypresses the creeping vine
May shoot, or hazles blossom near the pine.
So sang these boys to Donace the lay,
Till sank the lustre of the setting day;
Eve's freshening star now warn'd them from the wood,
And pastured bulls their stalls inquiring stood.

Calphurnius.

CALPHURNIUS.

Aft. Ch. 281.

ECLOGUES.

TITUS Calphurnius Siculus, or the Sicilian, was a friend of Nemesian, to whom he inscribes his Eclogues. They are partly political, partly fanciful, in the manner of Virgil. The style is classical; the imagery has occasionally much of picturesqueness and originality; and there is an air of natural rusticity in the manners.

CALPHURNIUS.

THE QUARREL.

ASTYLUS.

HA! Lycidas, you're late: beneath this shade
Alcon the boy, and Nyctilus have play'd:
I sate as umpire, and the prize was named:
Kids and the mother goat the one proclaim'd,
The other staked a hound the conqueror's meed,
And swore the whelp was half of lion-breed;
But Alcon won them both; for his the victor reed.

LYCIDAS.

What! Astylus! a likely tale, in sooth,
That Nyctilus could yield to that raw youth:
Tell me that linnets croak when crows are by,
Or dismal owls with vocal thrushes vie.

ASTYLUS.

Then may I suffer scorn from her bright eyes
For whom my wasted heart in secret sighs;

If Nyctilus with Alcon can compare,
More in soft piping than in features fair.

LYCIDAS.

Aye—I'm deceived, I see: you cannot err;
Your judging eyes, not ears, the song prefer:
One has a sallow cheek: true sentence thine!
And prickly chin; his beard a porcupine.
The other, like an egg, of smooth-limb'd mould;
With laughing eyes, and locks like threads of gold;
And when he sings, Apollo's self behold!

ASTYLUS.

Well—if the art of song were known to thee,
Perchance young Alcon might commended be.

LYCIDAS.

Ha! insolent! I challenge THEE to sing:
To THEE great umpire! I my gauntlet fling:
Wilt thou accept my brave? I care not, I,
Though thy dear Alcon sate as umpire by.

ASTYLUS.

Canst thou pretend to win a prize from me?
Who, think'st thou, lout, will deign to pipe with thee?
Thy dry lips sputter sounds, like drops from eaves,
And thy voice sobs with every word it heaves.

LYCIDAS.

Lie as thou wilt: thou can'st not truly say
Of me, what of thyself Lycotas may:
But wherefore waste we time in vain dispute?
See here Mnasylus: now belike you're mute.
But if you still are willing, knave! begin:
If he be judge, 'tis more than words must win.

ASTYLUS.

Rather, I own, would I the prize resign,
That prize which, uncontested, still is mine;
Than thus ignobly match my voice with thine.
But so thou shalt not 'scape. Yon stag behold,
Among the bedded lilies, wanton, roll'd;
Though my own Petale the favourite love,
The stake is thine, if thou the victor prove.

He knows the rein; if call'd will credulous haste,
And with tame mouth th' alternate viands taste.
Seest thou his head with antlers branching wide?
Round his slim throat the shining ribbands tied?
His tangled brow with snowy halter graced?
The belt of glassy beads that girds his waist?
Soft roses twist his horns with fragile twine;
See his long neck with glistening collar shine:
The wild boar's ivory tusk beneath is slung,
On his mark'd breast in moony whiteness hung.
Such as he is, there grazing in the dale,
I stake him now; that, when my lays prevail,
The wager known may save thy lying tale.

LYCIDAS.

He thinks to fright me with his stake; but here
How much I dread the wager shall appear.
Two colts, thou know'st, are mine; unharness'd yet;
Of these *Swift-flier* as a stake I set.
Wean'd from his dam along the mead he strays,
And with his tender teeth but learns to graze.
Light is his foot, not prominent his side,
His neck not ponderous, arching in its pride:

Low is his back; his keen head high is borne;
And his turn'd hoof is bound with slender horn;
His hoof, that wantons o'er the verdant plain,
Skims with a touch, nor bends the brittle grain.
This, if o'ercome, I venture as thy prize:
And swear by all the woodland Deities.

MNASYLUS.

My leisure serves: your songs will charm my ear;
Then, if so please you, I as umpire hear:
Beneath yon oak the Muses' selves have made
A couch of herbage, and a mossy shade.
Or, should the brook's near brawl obstruct the theme,
Quit we the bank of this fast-purling stream;
For from the fretted rock sounds hoarse the spring,
And the shrill waters on their gravel ring.

ASTYLUS.

Then, if it please you, let us rather tend
Where neighbouring rocks a vaulted cavern bend;
Rocks where the clinging moss, of greenest hue,
Drops from its fringy down the filter'd dew:

In fretted hollows winds th' o'er-arching cell,
In scallop wrought, incrustated with shell.
Come then; and with the silence of the cave
Exclude th' intrusive murmurings of the wave.
There, would we sit, the spar a seat bestows,
Or, would we lie, the grass in tufted verdure grows.
Give o'er the quarrel: I your songs would hear:
Alternate loves will better please mine ear:
Come, Astylus! be Petale thy praise:
And, Lycidas! let Phyllis prompt thy lays.

LYCIDAS.

Mnasylus, aye—lend all thy ears: they say
Thou hast heard wonders of his pipe and lay;
Wert thou not umpire, when he tuned his note,
In the green wood, against a linnet's throat?

ASTYLUS.

I cannot hold my peace at gibes like these;
Though passion burst me: let him, if he please,
Or sing, or listen; but his purpose here
Is only spite, nor will he sing, nor hear:

'Twould please me though to see his colour fly,
While you, our judge, condemn'd his songster villainy.

LYCIDAS.

Thy baby efforts in the music-strife
Are like my own, when reaching at a wife.
Our neighbours Stimicon and Ægon stood
With silent laughter in the shrubby wood;
When late I play'd the man, and strove to sip
A lover's kiss from pretty Mopsa's lip.

ASTYLUS.

Oh if Mnasylus, stronger far than me,
Were not beside us, urchin! thou should'st see
If ever youngster were so maul'd as thee!

MNASYLUS.

Why will you wrangle thus, and chafe, and chide?
If 'tis a match,—but no—I'll not decide:
Some other umpire may pronounce for me;
And look—some neighbours I approaching see:
Let Mycon or Iolas be your man:
They may compose your quarrel—if they can.

QUINTUS SMYRNÆUS.

Fourth Century.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE ILIAD.

In such total darkness is every thing concerning this author involved, that his very name is the subject of doubt. The circumstance of Quintus, or, in the Greek spelling, Cointus, being a name foreign to Greece, has led to the supposition that the poem is anonymous; and that a Roman, who was the possessor of the manuscript, had inscribed it with his own name, which was mistaken by the copyists for that of the author. But the author himself might have been of Roman extraction, and yet written in Greek. Whoever he was, we

have his own evidence for his being a native of Smyrna. The surname of Calaber, by which he is commonly known, attached to him from the place where the copy of the poem was discovered. It was found by Cardinal Bessarion in a monastery of Calabria, near Otranto.

It has been hastily concluded that this poem is a mere cento from Homer. Quintus more probably modelled himself on those epic poets, who continued the 'Tale of Troy' after Homer: and who were distinguished by the title of the 'Cyclic Poets' from their poems forming an *epic cycle*, or circle of events, relating to the Trojan war. It has been conjectured that Quintus borrowed his fable from the "Memnon" of Arctinus, the Milesian; the "Little Iliad" of Lesches, the Lesbian; and the "Destruction of Troy" of Stesichorus, the Sicilian.

This poem is highly interesting as the most ancient specimen extant of the post-homeric epopœa; and it has a vigour and peculiarity of character which cannot belong to mere imitation. As a supplement, it naturally wants the completeness of an

entire action; and is in fact a succession of actions with their successive heroes. But the interest never languishes. The characters have a dramatic energy, a force, and contrast, which we desiderate in those of Virgil: he has evidently formed himself on a more ancient, a more simple, and more vigorous school; and often recalls to us the racy nature, and pregnant fancy of Homer, in the strong pathos of his incidents, and the fertility of his images. Yet Gilbert Wakefield, whose critical competency as a scholar cannot be doubted, but whose taste had imbibed a tincture of the classic prejudice, speaks of Quintus, in his correspondence with Charles Fox, as an author more interesting from the curious nature of his story than from his genius; and styles his poem puerile. Is there nothing in Homer which might seem puerile in the eyes of a modern, if viewed without reference to the manners of his age? Quintus has in fact retained the romantic credulity of the fabulous ages, in the spirit of Homeric simplicity; and with a faithful regard to those heroical traditions which he found recorded in the ancient post-home-

ric bards. Had the same details been found in Homer, classical enthusiasm would have dwelt on these supposed puerilities in reverent acquiescence.

QUINTUS SMYRNÆUS.

ENCOUNTER OF THE AMAZON PENTHESILEA, WITH AJAX AND ACHILLES.

THEM when the war-skill'd Amazon descried,
Hot-rushing through the fearful press of war
Like beasts of prey, she sprang before them both,
Like to a panther of the woods, whose heart
Thirsts for destruction; when, with dreadful sweep
Of her lash'd tail, she on the hunters springs,
Advancing on her; they, in corslet mail'd,
Await her onset, trusting in their spears:
So did those warrior men, with lifted lance,
Await Penthesilea. Round them clang'd
The jointed brass, as they their weapons poised
In sudden motion. She, the first, with strength
Launch'd her long spear, which on Achilles' shield
Smote, but rebounding shiver'd at the touch:
Such arms immortal Vulcan's skill had framed.
Straight against Ajax she a second spear
Extended shook, and aim'd in thought, and cried

To both in glorying voice: "That other shaft
Fled from my hand in vain: with this, I deem,
The strength and life I shall of both destroy;
Though both ye vaunt yourselves the bravest men
Among the Greeks: then lighter shall the scathe
Of conflict prove to Troy's steed-taming sons.
Come now, approach me nearer, so be taught
What vigour swells the breast of Amazons;
For I am sprung from Mars: no mortal man
Created me; but Mars himself unslaked
In battle-tumult. Thus to me has fallen
A strength superior to the strength of men."
So gloried she: while they with laughter heard.
Then swift her darted lance transfix'd the greave
Of Ajax, through the solid silver folds;
But pierced not the fair skin; though urged to pierce
Armour and flesh. The Fates had not decreed
That now the painful spear should in his blood
Embrue its point, amidst embattled foes.
Ajax, then, heeded not the Amazon;
But towards the throng of Trojans press'd, and left
Penthesilea to Achilles' arm
Singly opposed; for, in his mind, he knew,

An easy labour would Achilles find,
Brave as she was; a turtle to a hawk.
Then groan'd she in her spirit, that her spears
Had both been launch'd in vain; but Peleus' son
Reviling spoke: "Oh woman! with what boast
Of empty words art thou come forth to us
In lust of battle: though we far transcend
All earthly heroes; for we boast our race
From Thunderer Jove: and Hector swift of foot
Would tremble, if he saw us from afar
Hurrying to fatal fight; and this my spear
Slew him, though valiant. Thou hast task'd thyself
Too highly, and art mad, that threatenest me
This day with death. But now thy latest sun
Hath shone upon thee, nor thy father Mars
Shall save thee from my hand. Thou shalt atone,
By an ill fate, thy rashness: like a deer,
Crossing a lion in the mountain ways,
Who makes the bulls his spoil. Hast thou not heard
How many men have stretch'd their limbs in death
Beneath this arm, by Xanthus' eddy stream?
Or hearing, have the Gods bereaved thy soul
Of reason, that the Fates implacable

May clutch thee in their grasp?" He said, and rush'd
Upon her, in his nervous grasp advanced,
Holding the murderous spear of lengthening beam,
Which Chiron framed; and suddenly above
The warrior-maid's right breast he wounded her.
The dark blood swiftly gush'd, and in her limbs
The strength was broken; from her hand she drop'd
Her mighty two-edged axe; around her eyes
Night darken'd, and the anguish overcame
Her spirit. Yet she breathed, and fix'd her gaze
Upon the man, her enemy; who now
Approach'd, to drag her from her fleet-hoof'd horse.
Then cast she in her mind, if, drawing forth
Her falchion from the scabbard, she should wait
The swift Achilles' onset, or leap down
From her fleet courser, and implore his grace;
And promise in abundance brass and gold,
Which charm, however fierce, the minds of men;
If haply thus Achilles' murderous strength
Might soften to persuasion; and respect
Of their congenial age might yield to her
The day of her return, and hoped escape.

So mused she, but the Gods will'd otherwise;
For, as she swift advanced, Achilles grew
Sorely incensed, and suddenly transfix'd
The body of her whirlwind-footed steed,
Together with herself: as one, before
The blaze of fire, transpierces with sharp broach
The entrails, and in haste prepares his meal;
Or as a huntsman, on the mountains, casts
His whizzing javelin, and a roebuck cleaves
Sudden athwart; the strong spear, flying through,
Sticks in some high-branch'd oak, or pine-tree trunk:
So did Achilles with his eager spear
Transfix the war-maid and her goodly steed.
She straight is roll'd in dust, and bloody pangs
Of death; yet gracefully she fell to earth;
Nor shame expos'd her body, but she lay
On her broad bosom, panting round the spear
That thrill'd her, and reclining on her steed.
E'en as a fir-tree stoops the shatter'd stem
To icy-breathing northern blast: though late
Tallest of pines in lengthening dale or wood,
And nourish'd by the earth, which it adorn'd,

Fast by a fountain; so the Amazon
Sank from her steed; so beautiful to sight;
Her body broken by the griding spear.
But now the Trojans, when they saw her slain,
Fled to the town in hurrying route, o'erwhelm'd
With grief and consternation at their heart.
As on the broad sea, when a freshening gale
Blows vehement, the mariners escape
Destructive wreck, one gallant vessel lost;
And few, and scatter'd, suffering 'midst the waves
Sore hardship, see at length the land appear,
And city of the haven: worn with toils
They hasten from the deep, and grieve the loss
Of that fair ship, and all their comrades, plunged
In blackening whirlpool by the storm: so they
Fled from the battle to their city-walls;
And all bewail'd the Amazonian maid;
And mourn'd their people slain in dismal war.
Then, with a laugh, Achilles over her
Stood vaunting loud: "Lie there in dust, the food
Of dogs and vultures, fond and feeble wretch!
Who tempted thee against me? thou didst think
To win perchance from aged Priam gifts,

Beyond all price, for slaughter of the Greeks.
But not the Gods have speeded thy design;
For we of earthly heroes are the chief
In power: a light to Greece, a bane to Troy,
And to thyself, ill-fated one!—since thee
Thy gloomy Fates, and thy own spirit, stir'd
To leave the woman's tasks, that thou might'st come
Into the battle, dreaded e'en by men."

This said, the son of Peleus wrench'd the lance
From the swift courser, and the hapless maid.
Both heaved beneath the murdering spear. He drew
From off her brows the helmet, glittering bright
As the sun's rays, or lightning: then her face,
Fallen as she was in dust, and blood-besmear'd,
And her fair forehead, shone disclosed, though dead,
In amiable beauty. When the Greeks,
That throng'd around her, saw, they wondering gazed:
For she was like the Goddesses; and lay
In mail'd habiliments upon the ground,
Like bold Diana, slumbering on the tops
Of mountains; when her limbs, in weariness,
Rest, and that arm reposing hangs, which spear'd

The bounding lion. Venus too, whose brows
Are wreath'd with flowers, the paramour of Mars,
Enhanced her beauties to the gazing sight,
Though laid among the dead; that she might touch
The brave Achilles with remorseful grief:
And many wish'd that, when they home return'd,
They might repose within the bed of love
With such a lovely spouse... Achilles' self
Was cut with anguish to the very heart
That he had slain her, nor the heavenly maid
Led as a bride to his own Thessaly,
Where steeds are pastured; for he saw her face
And stature faultless, as of Goddesses.

COMBAT OF MEMNON AND ACHILLES.

As when from some steep mountain's sky-capt ridge
A rock enormous rolls, which, high above,
Jove's untired arm with crackling lightning casts
Down headlong from the cliff: shattering it bounds
O'er tangled thickets and long-clefted dells;
The hollow glens reverberate to the crash;
The flocks, low-feeding in the wood, beneath
The rolling ruin, tremble and look up;
Or herds or other living thing; and shun
The imminent destruction's furious shock:
So did the Grecians dread the charging spear
Of Memnon. Then did Nestor swift approach
Valorous Achilles: sorrowing for his son
He spoke: "Achilles! bulwark of the Greeks!
Slain is my dear-loved son, and Memnon strips
The armour of the dead. I fear, his corse
Will be the prey of dogs. Help thou, and soon;
He is the friend, who of a friend deceased
Remembers him, and grieves that he is not."
So said he, and Achilles, while he heard,

Was touch'd with grief, and seeing Memnon thus
In the drear conflict slaying with his lance
The Greeks by troops, he left the Trojans straight,
Whom in a distant phalanx he had smote,
With slaughter, and desisted from the fray.
He went direct 'gainst Memnon, full of wrath
For dead Antilochus, and others slain.
But Memnon snatch'd a stone with lifting hands,
Which as the landmark of the sheafy plain
The hinds had placed; and this the man divine
Hurl'd 'gainst the shield of Peleus' dauntless son.
He the huge rock, intrepid, scorn'd; and came
Nigh, with extended javelin, and on foot:
His horses were at distance left, behind
Th' array of battle; and, above the shield,
Smote his right shoulder. He, though wounded, chafed,
Still undismay'd in soul; and suddenly
With his firm spear Achilles' shoulder struck:
His blood flow'd from him. Vainly therefore joy'd
The hero, braving him with haughty words:
"Now surely deem I thou shalt undergo
Terrific fate, and perish by this hand;

Nor farther scape from battle. Wretch! why thus
Hast thou so many Trojans scornfully
Given to perdition, vaunting that thou art
Of all in valour chief; the boasted son
Of an immortal Nereid? But the day
Of fate is on thee: I too draw my race
From Gods; Aurora's son; whom far away
The nymphs, that tend th' Hesperian orchard, rear'd
Fast by the ocean stream. I heed thee not
In the rough battle, knowing by how far
A Goddess-mother doth eclipse the nymph,
Of whom thou boastest that thou art the son.
Mine beams the light to mortals and to Gods:
All works within the undecaying Heaven
By her are perfected, that, fair and good,
Bring help to man. Thine, seated in the depths
Of sterile sea, dwells with the whales, and boasts
Her mansion midst the fishes: indolent,
And all unknown. I nought regard the nymph,
Nor liken her to Goddesses in heaven."

He said, and him Achilles thus rebuked:
"What evil spirit, Memnon! stirs thee now
To meet me, and compare thyself to me

In battle? I am thy superior far
In strength, in stature, and in race: the blood,
That fills my veins, descends from high-soul'd Jove
And mighty Nereus. He it was begat
Those ocean-nymphs the Nereids, whom the Gods
Honour in heaven; but Thetis above all;
Giver of glorious counsel; and that, erst,
She shelter'd Bacchus in her palace bowers,
From fear'd Lycurgus' fatal violence:
And Vulcan, skill'd artificer in brass;
When, from the skies thrown headlong, she received
Within her mansion, and released from chains
The Lord of Thunder. This th' all-seeing Gods
Bear in their memories, and venerate
My mother Thetis in the blessed heaven:
And thou shalt prove that she, who gave me birth,
Is very Goddess, when my brazen spear,
Driven by my force of arm, shall pierce thee through,
Lancing thy vital part. Patroclus' loss
I once avenged on Hector; and on thee
Will I revenge Antilochus: for know,
Thou hast not slain a feeble coward's friend.
But why, like stammering infants, stand we thus,

Vaunting our parents' actions, and our own?
Lo! Mars is near thee: lo! my strength is nigh!"
So saying, he grasp'd the hilt of his long sword,
And bared it from the scabbard. Not less prompt,
On th' other side, came Memnon; and they closed
Impetuous. Fierce, alternately, they smote,
Unsated, glorying in their strength of heart:
And frequent clash'd their shields, by Vulcan's art
Divinely temper'd; and their helmets touch'd
In rude collision, while the batter'd cones
Struck sparkles from the shock. Jove friendly sent
To either rival strength, and bade them rise
With loftier port, unwearied, like to Gods
Rather than men. Exulting in the fray,
Both sought to drive their blades, with rapid thrust,
Into each other's body, 'twixt the shield,
And high-plumed helmet. Thither aim'd they still
With all their force; or, now, above the greaves,
Or underneath the cuirass, fitted close
On their strong frames, impell'd the forceful blow.
Th' eternal armour with each motion clank'd
Around their shoulders; and vociferous din
From Trojans, Greeks, and Æthiopians, mix'd

In closing fight, arose into the air:
From underneath their feet the smoking dust
Swept upwards to the sky; for hot the work
Of battle grew: as, on the mountain sides,
A cloud is hung of thickly-gathering rain:
The roaring channels of the rivers swell
With the down-rushing waters; echoes hoarse
The fall of torrent cataracts without bound:
And all the shepherds dread the wintry burst
Of rains, and darkness, grateful to the wolves,
And other beasts, in trackless forests bred;
So round their feet the dust in circles flew.
With noisome cloud, and veil'd the sun's clear light,
Shadowing the air. A sore affliction fell
On all their people from the blinding dust,
And evil chance of fight: when, suddenly,
Some God dispersed the cloud, that shrouded thick
The battle. The destroyer Fates set on
The thronging squadrons in the groaning strife,
Nor Mars from ghastly carnage stop'd his hand.
So the wide earth polluted swam with gore,
And blood was pour'd upon it. With delight
Gloomy Destruction gazed; the spacious plain

Of Troy, where steeds were pastured, with the dead
Was narrow'd; all between th' enclosing streams
Of Simois and Scamander, as they run
From Ida to the sacred Hellespont.

Now, when the fight was drawn to lingering length,
And both the combatants an equal might
Put forth, the dwellers of Olympus look'd
From the high heaven: some joying in the sight
Of Peleus' son, unworn by combat's toils;
Some in the youth divine, who drew his birth
From Tithon and Aurora. Then, above,
The clanging skies resounded, and the sea
Echoed far off, and the dark earth was moved
Under their feet. Round Thetis thronging press'd
The daughters of great Nereus, in dismay
For brave Achilles, nor restrain'd their fear.
Aurora trembled for her son; the whilst
She rode upon her coursers through the air:
And near her stood the daughters of the Sun,
Amazed, within the Zodiac's track: whose ring
Jove placed, for th' indefatigable Sun
To run his yearly course; beneath whose signs
All live and die, while daily he revolves

Unintermitted, and the years roll round
The ages. Then a bitter strife had fallen
Among the blest immortals, but that he,
Who rolls the deep-toned thunder, wise decreed
His counsels, and sent down two Fates that stood,
Sudden, beside the warriors. Dark the one,
And cloudy-pale, near Memnon drew, and touch'd
His heart: the other, with bright aspect, sought
War-stain'd Achilles. At that sight the Gods
Raised a loud cry: some pensive anguish fill'd,
Others a joy gay-brightening into smiles.
Meantime the heroes closed in bloody fray,
Still obstinate in valour; nor perceiv'd
The near-approaching Fates. A man would say
The shock of painful conflict was the strife
Of strong-arm'd giant and of Titan stern:
Such was their valiant strife; and when they closed
With swords, or, springing forward with a bound,
Whirl'd the huge stone, though stricken, neither turn'd
His back to battle, nor gave ground through fear;
But shielded with immeasurable strength
Stood motionless as rocks: for both could boast

Their race from mighty Jove. So still the scales
Of strife Bellona equal held; that long
They might in conflict firm-opposing strive;
They, and their dauntless friends. These strenuous fought
To aid their princes, till the blades were bent
On the hack'd shields; nor one, of those that struck,
Had scaped a wound, but from the limbs of all
Blood, mix'd with dust, ran trickling to the ground,
While still they striving fought. The ground beneath
Was cover'd with the corses, thick as clouds,
Through which the Sun in Capricorn slow moves,
And mariners pale tremble at the sea.
The neighing steeds and rushing squadrons trod
The dead beneath their feet, as leaves thick-strown
Beneath some forest, when the winter comes,
And autumn sere hath shed its foliage round.

Thus, amidst blood and corses, fought they still,
These glorious sons of Gods; nor ceased to rage
Inveterate 'gainst each other. Strife then high
Balanced the scales of battle, and the one
Sank down. Achilles then below the breast
Wounded the Godlike Memnon; slanting pass'd

The sword blood-darken'd, and the pleasant life
Instant escaped. In black and floating gore
He fell: his massive armour round him clang'd:
Earth rang beneath him; and his comrades round
Stood panic-struck. The Myrmidons despoil'd
His body, and the Trojans fled; behind,
Achilles like a whirlwind swift pursued.

Aurora groaning veil'd herself with clouds,
And earth was darken'd. All the rapid Winds
Rush'd at her mandate on their airy way,
Down to Troy-plain, and hover'd round the dead.
They snatch'd the son of Morning from the earth,
And bore him through the white and lucid air;
And their fallen brother in their spirit mourn'd:
While Ether groan'd around. As many drops
Of trickling blood as from his limbs were shed,
Became a sign miraculous to men
In after ages: these the Gods transform'd
Into a sounding river, which on earth
They who, around the roots of Ida dwell,
Call Paphlagonius. Through the foodful soil
It glides in sanguine stream, whene'er the day
Fatal to Memnon dawns; his day of death;

And from the wave intolerable bursts
Mephytic odour, that a man would say
Some deathly wound exhaled its dropping gore.
So will'd the counsels of the Gods. Thus flew
The winds, upbearing Morning's valiant son,
Some space above the earth, in darkling cloud.
Nor did the Æthiop bands stray wide apart
From their dead prince. A God caught suddenly
Them also; adding to their lingering feet
The swiftness which they hoped: that swiftness soon
To be their portion, when, on wings upborne,
They should rise hovering on the buoyant air.
So now they follow'd fast upon the Winds,
Mourning their king: as when some hunter lies
Prostrated in the woods, by savage jaws
Of boar or lion: his uplifted corse
Is by his patient comrades borne along
In grief: behind them press the following dogs,
And oft with plaintive whine lament their lord,
Lost in the fatal hunt; so they forsook
The ruthless battle, and, with many a groan,
Pursue the rapid Winds, enwrapt around
With marvellous cloud: the Trojans and the Greeks

Stand mute at gaze, that all should vanish quite,
They and their king; and in deep silence muse
With thoughts disturb'd. The wearied Winds convey'd
The corse of warlike Memnon, and with moan
Laid on the banks, where rolls Æsepus by
His stream deep-flowing. There delightful blooms
A grove, devoted to the fair-hair'd Nymphs.
The daughters of Æsepus there upraised
A monumental mount, and planted it
Thick with all shady trees; and, round about,
Full many a Goddess shriek'd the funeral dirge,
Honouring the son of Morning sky-enthroned.
Then drop'd the Sun's round light, and then from heaven
Came down Aurora to bemoan her son.
Twelve maids of beauteous ringlets round her hung:
To their presiding care did Jove assign
The lofty ways of ether, where Day's orb
Turns ever-rolling round its circled goal;
And Dawn, and Night, and all created things
That act the will of Jove. Around his hall
And adamantine gates the light-heel'd Hours

Forever pass, swift-gliding round and round,
And bear along the fruitage-burthen'd year:
While in revolving circle with them move
The frozen Winter, and the flower-twined Spring,
And lovely Summer, and boon Autumn, crown'd
With nodding clusters. They then gliding down
From sky-topt ether, with unbounded grief
Bewail'd o'er Memnon; and the Pleiad Maids,
Descending from their showery-dropping stars,
With them dissolved in weeping. The high hills
Shrill'd mournful, and Æsepus' gliding stream
And soft lamentings still incessant rose.

DEATH OF ACHILLES.

MIDST these the son of Peleus smote his foes,
The Trojan people, down: earth's fertile plain
Reck'd all with blood, as with the drops of dew:
The streams of Xanthus and of Simois heaved
Groaning with heaps of dead. He fiercely still
Hung on their rear, and forward drove the rout,
E'en to their very walls; for terror-struck
They fled: and he had there destroy'd them all,
And on the very threshold of their gates
Prest his firm foot, drawn back the massy bars,
And burst their hinges; with oblique assault
Headed the Greeks through that discover'd breach,
And storm'd the towers of Priam, and o'erturn'd
The blessed city, but that Phœbus felt
His anger rise within him, when he saw
The countless deaths of heroes. Down he came,
Like to a lion, from Olympus' top;
His quiver, and his deadly arrows slung
Athwart his shoulder; and he cross'd the chief,
And stood his arrows and his bow clang'd shrill;

A flame of unextinguishable fire
Shot sparkling from his eyes. Beneath his feet
The solid earth was moved; and with a cry
The God of lofty stature, terrible,
Shouted aloud: if so he might turn back
Achilles from the fight, with terror seized
Of a God's utter'd voice, and rescue Troy.
"Fall back, oh Son of Peleus! from the host
Of Troy, and stand far off: it is not meet
That thou shouldst longer lay thy evil hands
On these thy foes, lest one of heavenly race,
Descending from Olympus, stretch thee here."
But not Achilles at th' immortal voice
Drew back with trembling, for th' unpitying Fates
Hover'd around him: therefore reck'd he not
The God; but, fierce retorting, cried aloud:
"Why, Phœbus! dost thou urge me, not inflamed
With such desire, to enter in the lists
With Gods? so succouring Ilium's haughty sons?
Nay, once already hast thou grieved me thus,
Turning me back from battle, when with me
Hector first met; and thou didst save the man,
For whom all Troy were earnest in their prayers.

But go, retire far off, or join the seats
Of other Gods in heaven, lest I, e'en I,
Should smite thee here, immortal as thou art."
This said, he left the God, and went for Troy;
The Trojans fled before their city walls,
And he pursued. But then th' indignant God
Burn'd in his spirit, and within himself
He spake: "Oh Powers of Heaven! how still unchanged
The fury of that mind! but him no more
Shall Jove himself, or other Power of Heaven
Uphold, who, in his frenzy, strives with Gods."
So saying, he grew invisible in clouds;
Dark mist was wrapt around him: forth he sent,
A dreadful shaft, and swift through th' ankle-bone
Transpierced Achilles. Instantaneous pangs
Crept to his heart: he, prostrate to the earth,
Fell like a tower which, by some hurricane,
Tumbles with sudden crash, while all the ground
Quakes far and near. So fell at once to earth
The strong limb'd body of Æacides.
Rolling his eyes around him, loud he cried
In bitter threatning words; "Who, privily,

Hath sent this deadly arrow? let him stand
Before me, and come forth in open sight;
That his dark blood and entrails may be pour'd
On my spear's point, and he may find his death.
For well I know that hand to hand, not one
Of earth-born heroes with the sword may hope
To hew me down, though in his breast he bear
A heart undaunted, yea, a dauntless heart;
And though his nerves be brass. But evermore
The weak in secret circumvent with snares
The brave and noble: let him now come forth
And meet me, though he boast himself a God,
Incensed against the Greeks; for I have hope
That Phœbus pierced me from his veiling cloud.
This my loved mother's voice once prophesied:
That I should perish by his galling shaft
E'en at the Scæan gate; nor was the voice
In vain." He said; and with unsparing hands
Tore from the cureless wound the shaft: forth gush'd
The life-blood, and he felt his spirits faint
With anguish, and the mortal agony
Quell his great heart; and, with indignant wrath,
He threw the dart at distance o'er the plain.

SUPPLICATION OF PARIS TO ŒNONE.

Wasting his secret vitals the sore pain
Prey'd on the wounded man. As he, that burns
With feverous plague, and with oppressive thirst
Feels his choak'd heart dried up, his breast on fire;
The fervid gall consumes him, and his soul
Hangs torpid, quivering, on his arid lips,
With faint desire of water and of life;
So did the spirit in his breast consume
With pain, and weakly languishing he spoke:
"Oh woman, most revered! detest me not
In this extremity, nor yet resent
That I once left thee, in thy lonely house,
A widow'd wife, against my better will.
Th' inevitable Fates impell'd me thus
Tow'rds Helena. But would that ere I press'd
Her bed in dalliance, I had rather died
Within thy tender arms, and breathed my last!
But come; I do beseech thee, by the Gods
Who dwell in heaven, by thy chaste bed, and joys
Of bridal love, be merciful to me!

Dispel this painful torture: on the wound,
That hastens to destroy me, lay those drugs
Of healing power, allotted to relieve
My spirit of its pangs, if only thou
Be willing; for it rests with thee; with thee
Abide the secret counsels, or to save
From dismal groans of death, or leave to die.
Now quickly pity me: with healing touch
Draw out the strength of these swift-fated darts;
For yet my vigour lasts, and still my limbs
Retain the warmth of life. Oh leave me not
Remembering still thy fatal jealousy;
Oh leave me not by piteous fate to die,
Thus falling at thy feet. Offend not Prayers;
They too the daughters are of Thunderer Jove;
And, wroth with haughty mortals, send behind
Pursuing Anger, and with groans Revenge.
But thou, revered of women! quick, arrest
The evil fate, although I have transgress'd
In my fond folly." Thus he spoke: his words
Persuaded not Œnone's gloomy mind;
But she with keen reproach, in bitterness

Of indignation, answer'd. "Why to me
Thus comest thou? to me, whom thou hast left,
In my lone house unceasingly to weep,
For Helena's dear sake; in whose soft bed
Thou took'st thy mirth and pleasantness; for she
Excels thy wedded wife, as fame hath told,
In ever-blooming youth. To her return,
And with all speed, her knees embrace, nor thus
Pour out to me thy piteous plaints and groans.
Oh that a wild beast's strength were in my breast!
That I could tear thy quivering flesh, and lap
Thy blood! such injuries hast thou done to me,
Bold in thy wickedness. Ah wretch! where now
Is thy kind Venus with the gaudy wreath?
Why does thy step-father, th' eternal Jove,
Now hide him from his son? Behold in these
Thy helpers: but from this my palace fly!
Fly far! the bane of Deities and men!
Because of thee, oh miscreant! grief has touch'd
Immortals; mourning o'er their slaughter'd sons.
But quit my mansion; bear thy sorrows hence,
Return to Helen; on her bed recline:

There moan in anguish all the night and day,
For this is meet: with mournful misery pierced,
Till thou art loosed from thy tormenting pains."
She said, and drove him sorrowing from her door:
Insensate! for she thought not on the doom
Appointed to herself; that on his death
Her own should quickly follow: thus the Fate,
That rules the will of Jove, had spun the days
Of Paris and Œnone. Him, the whilst
With painful faltering limbs, and deep-fetch'd sighs,
He climb'd the crags of Ida, Juno saw,
Then seated on Olympus, in the court
Of Jove; and her immortal heart was glad.

LAMENTATION OF HELEN,
AND REMORSE OF ŒNONE.

In all variety of wretchedness
Continual wailing, Helena now shriek'd
Among the Trojan women; now within
Her secret bosom smother'd the deep grief
That swell'd her heart; and to herself she said,
"Oh man! the desolation of us all!
Of me, of Troy, and of thyself! thou thus
Hast miserably perish'd. I am left
In horrible distress, and look to see
Misfortune yet more fatal. Would to heaven!
Harpies had snatch'd me from the earth, or ere,
By my pernicious destiny constrain'd,
I follow'd thee. Lo! now the Gods have sent
Calamity upon thee, and on me
Ill-fated. All, with nameless horror seized,
Turn shuddering from me: all pursue with hate
My wretched being. Whither should I fly?
If to the Grecian host, the Greeks will stain
My body with dishonour. If I here

Remain, the women and the men of Troy,
Together throng'd, will run from every side,
And tear me piece-meal: nor my corse will rest
Cover'd with earth, but beasts and flights of birds
Dismember and devour. Would I had died
By my own hand, or ere I saw this day!"

She said; and less her consort dead bewail'd,
Than her own heinous sin. Like her, around,
The Trojan women wail'd; but, in their minds,
Disturb'd with various sorrows: some recall'd
Their fathers, some their husbands, or their sons,
Or their dear-honour'd brothers, slain in war.

Nor less Œnone felt distraction tear
Her haughty soul. Yet, 'midst the dames of Troy,
She went not forth, lamenting; but apart,
In her own mansion, groaning heavily,
Lay on that bed where he had lain, whom once
She call'd her husband. As when icy frost
Is o'er the tops of woody mountains spread,
And whitens many a valley, melted soon
By the warm western gusts, the heights around
In thaw'd commotion roll their trickling drops;
The boundless congelation down the steeps

Dissolves, as from some fountain gushes cold
The bubbling stream; so, in her agony
Of mighty grief, she melted into tears,
And mourn'd the husband of her virgin youth.
Thus, sighing bitterly, within herself
She spoke: "Alas! for my abandon'd guilt!
Woe to my wretched life! how hard my fate,
Who dearly loved a husband, and, with him,
Had hopes to tread the honour'd path of life;
Wearing the May of youth, with soft decline,
In one unbroken harmony! The Gods
Have will'd it otherwise; and would to heaven
The gloomy Fates had snatch'd me from the world,
When I was doom'd to pine in solitude,
Without my Paris. But, if in his life
He left me, I will do a deed of fame;
And clasp him in my death: since morning's light
For me has charms no more." She said; and tears
From underneath her eyelids piteous flow'd:
Her husband still, consummating his death,
To busy memory rose; and thus she wept,
Dissolving slow, like wax before the flame,
In secret; for she fear'd her sire, and those,

The damsels of her household; till the night
Rush'd from broad ocean o'er the sacred earth,
And brought to men a respite from their toils.
Then, while her father slept, and all the train
Of slaves, she broke the palace gates, and forth
Leap'd like a whirlwind: swift her flying limbs
Bore her away, nor feebly bow'd her knees:
Her feet, in light precipitated haste,
Still bore her on, by Fate and Venus urged.
Nor did she dread, in darkness of the night,
To rush on shaggy beasts, her dread before.
She trod the rugged mountains, with firm step
Passing each rock, each precipice, and chasm.
The heavenly Moon beheld her from on high;
Remembering blest Endymion, as he lay
Upon the mountain top: compassionate
She saw Œnone force, 'midst rocks and chasms,
Her desperate path; and sudden from above
Shone in full brightness, and reveal'd, distinct,
Each craggy pass. Ascending still, she reach'd
The mountain summit where the Nymphs, around
The corse of Paris, long had pour'd their wail.
Still the strong fire encircled him: for still

The shepherds of the mountain, far and near,
Assembling, thickly piled the sacred wood,
And brought love-offerings; and with last lament
Honour'd their comrade and their prince, and stood
In circle round, bewailing. When she saw
The corse before her eyes, she utter'd not
Shrieks, though sore-anguish'd; but within her robe
Enwrap'd her lovely visage, and at once
Leap'd on the pile. An instantaneous cry
Burst from the multitude; and she was burn'd,
Clasping her husband. All astonish'd gazed
The Nymphs, when they beheld Œnone fall
Beside the corse; and one, among the rest,
Thus musing spake: "Most surely criminal
Was Paris, who forsook so chaste a wife,
And bore by stealth a frantic spouse away,
The grief and ruin of himself and Troy;
Insensate! nor regarded he the woe
Felt by the modest partner of his bed;
Of her who, with affection unreturn'd,
And love repaid with hate, yet cherish'd him
Beyond the radiance of the blessed sun."

Ausonius.

AUSONIUS.

Aft. Ch. 365.

EPIGRAMS. IDYLLS. EPISTLES.

English Translators:

KENDELL, FANSHAW, JAREZ HUGHES, STANLEY.

DECIMUS Magnus Ausonius was the son of Julius Ausonius, an eminent physician of Gaul, and Æmilia Æonia. He was born at Burdigala, the modern Bourdeaux; and, at the age of thirty, filled the chair of rhetorical professor in that city. He was appointed by Valentinian preceptor to Gratian, his son; and attended that emperor in his German campaigns. He brought back with

him a young female captive, whom he instructed in Latin, and of whom he seems to have been warmly enamoured. Under Gratian he was made questor, and prætorian prefect; and was raised to the consular dignity. After the death of Gratian, and the defeat of the usurper Maximus at Aquileia, he obtained leave of Theodosius to retire into his own country. He was married to Attusia Lucana Sabina, who died in her twenty-eighth year, and by whom he had two sons,—Ausonius and Hesperius.

Ausonius was preceptor to Paulinus, afterwards bishop of Nola; whose poems and letters are extant. He addresses to him several poetical epistles, remonstrating on his abandonment of literary pursuits, and seclusion from the world; in allusion to Paulinus having embraced the Christian profession, at the persuasion of his wife Therasia. Paulinus, in an epistle to Ausonius, written, after the Ausonian manner, in three different metres, elegantly, and eloquently defends himself:

Such concord was between us, that, alike
In ardour, not in power, we both invoked

Deaf Phœbus in his Delphic cave, and call'd
The Muses, Deities; and sought the gift
Of eloquence, that gift of God alone,
From groves, or mountain-tops. Another force
Moves now my spirit, and a greater God:
And other manners asks, and purer thoughts.

This is not the language of one Christian to another; and it should seem scarcely possible to read the epistles of Ausonius, in which Therasia is so bitterly inveighed against under the name of Tanaquil, together with the answers of Paulinus, and not draw the inference that Ausonius was any thing but a Christian: yet they, who feel a zealous anxiety that this writer of impure epigrams should be numbered among the ancient Christians, can see nothing in these expostulations and defences, but an entire unanimity of opinion. We are reminded also that Ausonius was educated under two Christian aunts. As well might his intimacy with Symmachus, the advocate of Paganism, be adduced in proof of his being a Pagan. Something of a more conclusive nature is however sought in a passage of Paulinus:

Inque tuo tantus nobis consensus amore est,
Quantus et in Christo connexâ mente colendo.

which is construed to mean, that they were as unanimous in their friendship for each other, as in their connexion with Christ. But the sense of the passage is mistaken, from not observing that *nobis* relates to *domus* in a former line, and not to Ausonius: in answer to the reproaches of Ausonius, that Paulinus had abandoned his friendship, the latter observes, "Both I and my family (domus) are as unanimous in our regard for you, as in our devotion to Christ."

On the evidence of these epistles, I have no hesitation in rejecting the Ephemeris, or Day's Occupation, and such other pieces as contain allusions to the Christian faith, from the compositions of Ausonius. They offer indeed a strange contrast to the "Nuptial Cento;" a patchwork of Virgilian lines so connected as to form an indecent sense. For this he makes the pitiful excuse of the emperor's commands: but if the plea be allowed for the cento, what shall be said for the epigrams? which, in studious refinements of obscenity, exceed the worst of Martial?

The works of Ausonius have descended to us in

a mutilated state. There seems, in particular, a deficiency in the pretty love-epigrams on his German captive, which are introduced by a poetico-prose dedication, in his usual manner, as if they formed a book by themselves; but four short epigrams are all that appear. From the poems that have reached us, Ausonius must be considered generally as a verse-maker, rather than a poet. His genius is minute and trifling, and he has a flimsy and affected taste. He mixes different metres; intersperses Greek with Latin; and prides himself in stringing a series of verses, that shall each end with a monosyllable; which monosyllable shall form also the first word of the line succeeding. He has however wit, fluency, and erudition; and some of his pieces attain to elegance.

AUSONIUS.

BURDIGALA.

I BLAME my impious silence, that delays,
'Midst chiefest cities, to record thy praise:
My birth-place! rivers, vineyards, men thy fame;
Genius, and manners, and a senate's name.
Was it, that conscious of a slender town,
I fear'd to give thee undeserved renown?
Not so I blush; not Rhine's barbaric shore,
Or Hæmus' icy top Ausonius bore:
Burdigala the soil that gave me birth;
Where mild the sky, and rich the water'd earth:
Long springs, brief winters, reign; hills wooded rise;
The foaming stream with tides of ocean vies.
Quadrangular the walls; the turrets bear
Their battlements amidst the clouds of air.
Within, the parted streets may wonder raise,
The range of dwellings, and the widening ways.

The gates that front where crossing spaces spread,
And river rushing from its fountain head:
While, as old Ocean heaves his flowing tide,
The buoyant fleets upon its bosom ride.
Why name the fount, with Parian stone o'erlaid,
Like Euripus' pent frith, with foaming motion sway'd?
How dark the shade of depth! how swoln the surge!
With what a rush, within its margent verge,
Pour'd through twelve mouths the headlong waters burst,
And, unexhausted, quench a people's thirst!
This, Median king! thy numerous camp had blest,
When the deep course of rivers sank deprest:
This wave thy train through cities might have borne,
And left Choaspes' native stream in scorn.
Hail secret fount! blest, bounteous, flowing still,
Dark, azure, glassy, deep, and clear, and shrill:
Hail, genius of the place! the patient sips
Thy panacean draughts with languid lips:
The name of Divona the Gauls assign,
Oh heavenly fountain, and indeed divine!

With less salubrious draught in tepid gush
From Aponus the bubbling waters rush;
Less pure with crystal light Nemausus gleams,
Less full Timavus rolls his sea-swoln streams.

EPITAPH

ON HIS SISTER JULIA DRYADIA.

Is there a virtue, which the prudent fair
Might wish, that fell not to my Julia's share?
And hers were virtues, which the stronger kind
Might wish; a manly nobleness of mind.
Good fame and sustenance her distaff wrought;
And, skill'd in goodness, she that goodness taught.
Truth more than life she prized: in God above
Her cares were wrapt, and in a brother's love.
A widow in her bloom, the maid austere
Might the chaste manners of her age revere.
She, who had seen six decades swiftly glide,
Died in the mansion where her father died.

ON HIS WIFE

ATTUSIA LUCANA SABINA.

THUS far dear ancestors have claim'd the verse,
And pious tears, as meet, bedew'd their herse.
Grief, racks, th' intangible and burning flame,
Meet in my ravish'd wife's recorded name.
Of noble line, of senatorian birth,
More splendid my Sabina from her worth.
Bereaved of thee in youth I wept forlorn;
Thee still, through nine Olympiads, widow'd mourn.
Nor yet in age my grief has soften'd been:
The pang still felt, the sorrow still is green.
Others in time affliction's balm have found;
Long life to me more keenly barbs the wound.
My destitute gray hairs in tears I steep;
And still more lonely, still more hopeless weep.
The speechless silence of the mansion round;
And the cold couch add rancour to the wound:
And ah! to share with no congenial breast
My joys, when glad; my sorrows, when distrest.
Still with new pain another's spouse I see;
Her worth compare, her faults contrast with thee.

Whether her faults prevail, her worth excel,
Alike thy opposite, or parallel.
No broken wealth, no empty joys I mourn;
But from my youthful arms a youthful consort torn:
Blithe, modest, grave, renown'd in charms, in race,
Thy husband's dear regret, Ausonius' pride and grace:
Four times had seven Decembers glided by,
Two sons, our pledges, saw their mother die.
They, by heaven's favouring bounty, flourish blest
E'en to thy wish, of every good possest:
Still may they flourish; and the lot be mine
To tell thee they survive, when blends my dust with thine.

EPIGRAMS

ON BISSULA, A GERMAN CAPTIVE.

I.

My Bissula whose house and lineage rose
Beyond the regions where the cold Rhine flows;
My Bissula, in Suevia's climates bred,
Where bursts the Danube from his fountain-head:
Enslaved, yet freed, now holds voluptuous sway
O'er him, who seized her as his warlike prey.
With no fond mother, no kind nurse, the maid,
Though destitute, no mistress proud obey'd;
Nor felt her fortune's wrong, her country's shame;
Free from the hour that she a slave became.
Transfer'd to Latian blessings, still the fair
A blue-ey'd German smiles, with yellow hair:
Her form and new-taught speech ambiguous vye,
Rhine for her birth contends with Italy.

II.

Oh my joy, my charm, my treasure,
My love, my pastime, and my pleasure!
Dear pupil! sweet barbarian! thee
Our Latian damsels envying see:
If my young girl's name be found
Somewhat of uncouther sound;
That grating sound let strangers hear:
Ah Bissula! it charms thy master's ear.

III.

My Bissula! nor wax, nor paint can trace
That native and inimitable grace:
Carmine and ceruse, seek some other fair:
At this complexion painting must despair.
With crimson roses lilies mix, infuse
Their tints in air, so catch her pure cheek's bloomy hues.

IV.

Artist! wouldst thou paint my maid,
Rival the bees that range th' Hymethian bowers:
Be her blooming tints display'd,
Cull'd, like the honey, from a thousand flowers.

EPISTLE TO AXIUS PAULUS,

THE RHETORICIAN.

If, in the fabling poet race
We may for once, reliance place;
Nor evermore they daubing spread
The varnish of their white and red;
Paulus! of the Castalian quire
Erst foster-son, but now the sire;
Or grandsire; or of age thrice told
Like the Tertessian monarch old;
See that your promise be not broken;
Phœbus commands that truth be spoken:
He lets the Muses rambling prate,
But cuts himself the furrow strait.
Let not the word you plighted fail;
But come with wheel, or come with sail:
Float down Garonne, whose tide-swoln plain
Contests, high surging, with the main;
Or let the beaten gravell'd way
By Blavia's fort thy car convey.
When Easter holidays are past,
I long to see my fields at last.

I loathe the squabble, and the throng;
The bustle chafes the streets along;
The squeeze is every where the same;
And broad-ways narrow'd lose their name;
Stun'd Echo in a ferment frets
With oaths and screams and prayers and threats!
A miry pig, or mad dog starts,
Or struggling oxen wedge their carts.
In vain I sit, retired within;
Nor walls nor shades exclude the din:
These, and a thousand things like these,
That quiet habits sore displease,
Force me to leave the crowded streets,
For the soft ease of green retreats;
Where in my idle, busy mood,
Grave trifles sweeten solitude.
Where, leisure time disposing still,
I nothing do, or what I will.
Would you then join me? haste along
With all your merchandise of song!
Dactylic, choriambic stock,
Elegy, epode, buskin, sock!
Such packets in your chariot bear,
For paper is your pious poet's ware.

Such household stuff you'll find with me;
Which at your service, Sir, shall be:
But use it, as the proverb saith,
With fair Greek honesty, not Punic faith.

ROSES.

'Twas spring; the morn return'd in saffron veil,
And breathed a nipping coolness in the gale.
A keener air had harbinger'd the Dawn,
That drove her coursers o'er the eastern lawn.
The breezy cool allured my feet to stray
And thus anticipate the fervid day.
Through the broad walks I trod the garden bowers,
And roam'd, refresh'd against the noontide hours.
I saw the hoary dew's congealing drops
Bend the tall grass and vegetable tops;
On the broad leaves play'd bright the trembling gems,
And airy waters bow'd the laden stems.
There Pæstan roses blush'd before my view,
Bedrop'd with early morning's freshening dew;
The sprinkled pearls on every rose-bush lay,
Anon to melt before the beams of day.
'Twere doubtful, if the blossoms of the rose
Had rob'd the morning, or the morning those.
In dew, in tint the same, the star and flower;
For both confess the queen of beauty's power.

Perchance their sweets the same: but this more nigh
Exhales its breath; and that embalms the sky:
Of flower and star the Goddess is the same,
And both she tinged with hues of roseate flame.
I saw a moment's interval divide
The rose that blossom'd from the rose that died.
This with its cap of tufted moss look'd green;
That, tip'd with reddening purple, peep'd between:
One rear'd its obelisk with opening swell,
The bud unsheathed its crimson pinnacle;
Another, gathering every purfled fold,
Its foliage multiplied; its blooms unroll'd;
The teeming chives shot forth; the petals spread;
The bow-pot's glory rear'd its smiling head:
While this, that ere the passing moment flew,
Flamed forth one blaze of scarlet on the view;
Now shook from withering stalk the waste perfume,
Its verdure stript, and pale its faded bloom.
I marvell'd at the spoiling flight of time,
That roses thus grew old in earliest prime.
E'en while I speak, the crimson leaves drop round,
And a red brightness veils the blushing ground.

These forms, these births, these changes, bloom,
decay,
Appear and vanish, in the self-same day.
The flower's brief grace, oh Nature! moves my sighs,
Thy gifts, just shown, are ravish'd from our eyes.
One day the rose's age; and while it blows
In dawn of youth, it withers to its close.
The rose the glittering sun beheld, at morn,
Spread to the light its blossoms newly born,
When in his round he looks from evening skies,
Already droops in age, and fades, and dies.
Yet blest that, soon to fade, the numerous flower
Succeeds herself, and still prolongs her hour.
Oh virgins! roses cull, while yet ye may;
So bloom your hours, and so shall haste away.

CLAUDIAN.

Aft. Ch. 395.

INVECTIVES. PANEGYRICS. AND MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

English Translators:

DIGGES, BUSDEN, KING, JABEZ HUGHES.

CLAUDIUS Claudianus has by some been thought a Spaniard, by others an Italian; and others again have decided that the place of his birth was Alexandria in Egypt. He came to Rome in the reign of Theodosius the Great, and was in favour with his sons Arcadius and Honorius. In 1493 a marble pedestal was dug up in Tra-

jan's forum at Rome, on which a statue of Claudian must formerly have stood. From the inscription it appears that Claudian was a military tribune, and state-secretary; and that Arcadius and Honorius erected this statue in honour of his genius, at the request of the Senate. Underneath was a Greek distich to this effect:

> Rome and her emperors Claudian's image raise,
> Who Virgil's judgment joins with Homer's lays.

This eulogium may be compared with that in Dr. Sprat's inscription on the monument of Cowley; where the same compliment is used, and with similar infelicity. Both Claudian and Cowley excelled in styles of poetry, which have no common point of resemblance with that of Homer or of Virgil.

Claudian was married to an African lady of distinction and fortune, through the kind offices of his patroness, the princess Serena, daughter of Theodosius and wife of Claudian's favourite hero, Stilicho, the Goth. Both Stilicho and Serena were executed by order of Honorius, on a charge of traitorous correspondence with Alaric: of which

however Zosimus, who wrote his history of the Roman Emperors under the younger Theodosius, declares them innocent. Whether Claudian, as has been, somewhat needlessly, supposed, was involved in the ruin of his patrons, does not appear. His epistle to the Prefect Hadrian, from which it has been inferred that he suffered persecution, is plainly ironical. The sacred poems annexed to the works of Claudian, from which it has been argued that he was a Christian, are thought, with more probability, to be the compositions of Claudius Mamereus, a contemporary of Sidonius Apollinaris.

It has been assumed that Claudian approaches the nearest to "the Virgilian majesty:" an opinion, I suppose, taken upon trust from the inscription on his pedestal. We hear also of the purity of his taste: as if it were intended to try the experiment, how far critical paradox might be pushed. If I were asked to point out a writer who formed the most direct contrast to the chaste dignity of Virgil's style, I should select Claudian. He has by no means approached

so nearly to Virgil as Valerius Flaccus, or Silius Italicus: nor indeed can he be placed at all in the same rank with the Post-Virgilian Epic poets; with Lucan or with Statius. He has left no work of rival magnitude or importance; for his occasional heroic essays, as on the Getic and Gildonic wars, will scarcely be called epic; and his "Rape of Proserpine," on which he himself appears to rest his fame, seems, from the fragment of it, to have been a composition of pompous labour, with no invention, and with no interest: unless it be invention to call up a car with dragons, or a fury with snaky locks; or unless the trite common-places of a hacknied mythology can be deemed interesting. If Claudian be compared with any other poet, it is not with Virgil that we must draw his parallel; but with Ovid: and he resembles Ovid only in his tawdry taste: not in his facility, nor in his imagination. He has all his conceit, rendered more offensive by an air of artificial effort, and studious polish; and he has none of his eloquence and none of his nature. In all the works of Claudian, it would be difficult

to point out a single natural, unaffected sentiment. His "Invectives" seem to be an attempt at a species of heroic satire: a sort of poetry very inferior to the moral satire of Juvenal. It is easy to conjure fiends, and set the old wheel, and rock, and water in motion: this is not to be naturally tall, but to walk upon stilts. Though containing occasional vigorous lines, these boasted "Invectives" are stuffed with bloated sentiment, and mythological bombast. The merit of Claudian is the merit of a court poet. He is always ready with his copy of occasional verses. His panegyrics are indeed heavy and turgid; but he excels in the florid graces and amatory prettinesses of the epithalamium. His versification, though somewhat monotonously rounded, is smooth and stately. He has a gay fancy, and shows a command of agreeable imagery; though usually in a gaudy taste. We meet also with passages of sententious point, and a sort of sparkling vigour, which, as they are easily remembered, are often quoted; but which have less the happiness of genius, than the trick of art.

CLAUDIAN.

EXORDIUM

OF THE POEM AGAINST RUFINUS.

Oft has the doubt my wavering bosom sway'd,
Whether this earth a ruling power obey'd;
Or, tost by chance, no care of heaven employ'd,
Without a pilot whirling through the void.
For, as I traced the world's harmonious chain,
The rocky barrier of the rushing main;
The year still-circling with returning flight,
And day relieved with interchange of night;
I felt the wisdom, and the firm controul
Of him, whose laws instruct the stars to roll;
Bids crown'd with varying fruits the seasons run;
The moon shed borrow'd light; his own the sun:
Midst wide-stretch'd shores the waste of waters hurl'd,
And on its airy centre poised the world.
But lo! what gloom the human prospect shrouds,
Veil'd in dark shadows, and ambiguous clouds.

The wicked flourish through a length of days;
The good are plunged in misery's thorny maze:
Again my tottering faith, incredulous, reel'd,
Again my reason would, reluctant, yield;
And search that blinder cause, whence matter springs
From the vague motion of the seeds of things:
From chance, not art, the forms of nature trace,
A host of atoms, whirl'd in empty space;
In doubtful sense discern a God below;
A God who *is* not, or can nothing know:
Before Rufinus' fate my doubts remove;
Heaven stands absolved, and there are Gods above!
When rise the bad, these murmurs I recall;
Dash'd from a height, they rush with heavier fall.

RISE OF RUFINUS.

THERE is a spot on Gaul's extremest shore,
Where chafes the circling ocean's billowy roar;
Where, legends tell, the wise Ulysses stood,
And raised the silent dead with sprinkled blood.
The wail of plaintive ghosts is heard around,
And faint shrill rustling of their flitting sound:
The peasant oft sees pallid spectres rise,
And forms departed glide before his eyes:
There leap'd the fury forth: the light serene
Of day grew dark, and sicken'd at her mien:
Her hideous howlings rent the shuddering sky,
And distant Britain caught the deathful cry.
Gaul rocks her plains, the tides recoiling turn,
And torpid rests the Rhine's meandering urn.

She feigns the looks of age; and round her head
The snakes, transform'd, in hoary tresses spread;
Hard wrinkles on her cheeks their furrows trace;
And faint she totters with dissembled pace.
Then to the walls of Elusa she flies,
Not first beheld nor foreign to her eyes;

To one more heinous than herself, she raised
Her envying glance, and fondly lingering gazed:
"Does ease, Rufinus! charm thee? shall thy bloom,
Inglorious, on thy native plains consume?
Ah! little conscious what thy stars decree;
What Fate and Fortune have prepared for thee!
Obey my voice, the world shall own thy reign;
Nor thou these old and feeble limbs disdain:
For magic strength is mine; the future age
Glows in my bosom with prophetic rage.
I know what strain Thessalia's sorceress sings,
When from her sphere the gleaming moon she brings:
I know the sage Ægyptian's potent signs,
And read strange meaning in the mystic lines:
Chaldæa spreads her orgies to my sight,
While Gods, invoked, obey th' enchanted rite:
From me no trees their oozing juice conceal;
All herbs their baneful properties reveal;
Whether on Caucasus they deadly spring,
Or Scythia's rocks produce them, while I sing:
Such as the fierce Medea cull'd of yore,
Or crafty Circe, skill'd in witching lore.

Oft have I made the ghosts my call attend,
And Hecate to midnight charms ascend:
Drag'd back the buried corse to breathe again,
And kill'd the living with my mutter'd strain:
Though still the Fates their line of being spun,
And long the vital thread remain'd to run.
My voice has forced uprooted oaks to move,
And stay'd the lightning, darted from above:
While rivers, at my bidding, backward fled,
And turn'd their currents to the fountain head.
But, lest thou deem my words a babbling sound,
Behold thy roofs, and mark the change around!"
She said; and lo! miraculous to sight
The snowy columns gleam'd metallic light:
The beams were gilded with a floating blaze;
And charm'd, elate, he feeds his greedy gaze.
So Lydia's king that untried blessing view'd,
With power of beautifying touch indued;
But, when the foodful banquet hardening glow'd,
The draught, with yellow ice congealing, flow'd;
O'er the sad gift his mournful eyes he roll'd,
And cursed his wish in the detested gold.

Then soul-subdued, "Or human or divine,
Thy call I follow, I am wholly thine!"
He said; and issuing from his native land,
Sought, at the Fiend's behest, the eastern strand;
Midst isles, for clashing rocks renown'd of old,
And seas, that round Thessalian Argo roll'd;
Where Thrace and Asia foaming straits divide,
And lofty turrets sparkle o'er the tide:
So far he pass'd, by Fates malignant led,
And in the palace rear'd his serpent head.
Straight court-intrigue his panting breast controul'd:
Truth fled, and equity was bought and sold;
Bribed the committed secret to betray,
His trusting client fell an easy prey:
Moved by the rivalry of gifts alone,
He barter'd honours from the venal throne;
With crimes redoubled nursed the fire within,
And anger'd into flame the ulcerous sin.

As ocean rolls, unconscious that its tide
Ingulphs the rivers that unnumber'd glide;
While here his waving course the Danube bends,
There seven-fold Nile in summer floods descends;

The deep flows on, still equal and the same:
So golden torrents satiate not his flame;
The jewell'd collar, or the cultured farm,
Alike awaits Rufinus' spoiling arm;
Earth's fruits the ruin of their lord prepare;
And smiling fields create the swain's despair;
From cots he drives them, from paternal meads;
Plunders the living, to the dead succeeds;
In heaps on heaps his gather'd wealth is roll'd;
His walls the pillage of a world infold;
The people, struggling in their chains, obey,
And wealthy cities own a subject's sway.
Whither, oh madman! dost thou rush? in vain,
To thee would flow the unexhausted main.
Were Lydia's golden-glittering streams thy own,
Or Cyrus' diadem, or Cræsus' throne,
Wealth never would be thine; unquench'd thy fires:
He still is poor who evermore desires.
An honest pittance to Fabricius brings
Contented wealth; he spurns the gifts of kings:
The seemly sweat from Cincinnatus' brow
Falls, as he bends above the ponderous plough;

And, underneath a hut's contracted shed,
Each warlike Curius rests his glorious head.
This poverty is affluence in mine eyes;
These roofs more lofty than thy turrets rise.
Pale luxury culls pernicious cates for thee,
And earth with unbought dainties teems for me.
The Tyrian crimson in thy fleeces flows;
Thy broider'd robe with deepen'd purple glows:
Here glistening flowers o'er painted meads diffuse
Their living pleasaunce, and their fancied hues.
There beds of down on burnish'd couches rise;
Here the smooth herb's expanded verdure lies;
That with no anxious throb disturbs the breast,
That with no terror breaks the slumberer's rest.
There courtier-crowds throng wide the thundering hall;
Here birds chaunt sweet, and rivulets murmuring fall.
The life, that little claims, is surely best,
And Nature blesses those who will be blest.
Did all but know to use the boon assign'd,
Then simple manners would reward mankind.

No ear would shudder at the trumpet's blare;
No javelin hiss upon the cleaving air;
No wind-tost ship rock on the rolling main,
Nor shattering engines hurl the turrets to the plain.

EPITHALAMIUM

ON THE MARRIAGE OF PALLADIUS,

Military Tribune and State Secretary,

WITH CELERINA, ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF STILICHO.

PROEM.

LOVE to the son and duty to the sire
These hurried lays with nuptial warmth inspire:
The comrade and the chief the Muse have led,
One my court-colleague, one my helm and head:
One, join'd by youth, congenial studies blends;
And one in honour and in age transcends:
Love for the son exacts the poet's fire;
The soldier's duty reverence for the sire.

VISIT OF VENUS.

It chanced, in quest of slumber's cool, the Queen
Of Love in vine-woven grot retired unseen:
Her star-bright limbs on tufted grass were spread:
A heap of flowers the pillow for her head.
The shadowy vine-leaf curls upon the spray,
And the fan'd clusters to the breezes sway.
Lovelier from sleep's neglect, she spurns the vest;
Through parting foliage gleams her heaving breast.
Th' Idalian maids lie round; the Graces twine
Their arms, and screen'd by spreading oak recline.
The winged boys, where shade invites, repose
On every side: unstrung their loosen'd bows:
While, on a neighbouring branch suspended high,
With gentle flames their breathing quivers sigh.
Some wakeful sport, or through the thickets rove;
Climb for the nest; or blithely strip the grove
Of dewy apples for the Queen of Love:
Along the bough's curved windings creeping cling,
Or hang from topmost elm with light-poised wing.

Others defend the wood; and put to flight
The wanton Dryads, pressing for the sight;
And woodland Gods: and at the Sylvans aim,
Far-gazing towards the cave, their darts of flame.
When sudden, from the neighbouring city, rise
Mix'd clamours, shouts of youths, and festal cries.
Through the green glades the breezes waft along
The sound of viols, and the dancers' song;
Italia's mountains Celerina sing,
Fields shout the bridegroom's name, and with Palladius ring.
On Venus' ear the jocund uproar rose;
Half-raised she sate, awaken'd from repose;
And, with her polish'd finger, clear'd away
The mist that on her eyelids lingering lay.
The straggling locks dishevelling round her head,
Nimbly she bounded from her flowery bed:
She questions every Nymph, and eager roves,
Demanding Hymen from th' innumerous Loves.
Him Cytherea chose: a Muse's son;
From him, their guide, the bridal moments run.
By him unblest ne'er rose the marriage bed,
Nor the raised torch its ritual splendour shed.

At length, discern'd by Venus' wandering sight,
The youth appears, beneath a plane-tree's height;
Thrown on the turf, his wary fingers bind
Th' uneven reeds, that catch the whisper'd wind.
His mouth, close-press'd, in murmur'd sighings ran,
With past'ral ditties, and soft airs of Pan:
Skim'd with returning lips the fragile cane,
And roll'd with hovering breath the varying strain.
At Venus' sight he paused, and stood; while, mute,
From his lax fingers slid to earth the flute:
Soft shone his eyes: the sun and bashful shame
Had tinged his snowy skin with flushing flame;
Loose o'er his cheek the cluster'd ringlets play'd,
The down o'ershadowing with a deeper shade.

She, first, accosts the silent bashful boy:
"Youth! wilt thou never leave this dear employ?
Shall the chaste Muses still engross thy heart?
Too emulous to match thy mother's art!
What ditty tunest thou in the noonday heat?
Are city harps than this thy pipe less sweet?
And dwells thy heart on sylvan groves and flocks,
And Echo's voice repeated from the rocks?

Come—tell the cause, why rapture rules the hour;
Why these shrill plaudits hail the bridal bower?
What maid is dower'd; her race, her land declare;
Where born; and how allied the wedded pair.
Tell—for thou know'st; nor thee eludes the rite;
Since thy libations sanctify the night."
" But now I marvell'd, Goddess! he replies,
That thou should'st linger, careless of these ties.
No humble stock admits thy gentle sway,
Where consuls' laurel'd rods their pomps display:
A house, that prop'd by magistracy stood,
And veins that held the world's selectest blood.
Is there an isle, whose rocky margin raves,
As the red ocean bursts in yelling waves:
Is there a tract, which dusky Æthiops claim,
Lone, and impervious to the voice of fame:
Which not Palladius' praises mild engage:
Kind temper, learned wit, and pleasant age?
Through all the dignities he gradual rose,
And saw the court's successive labours close:
Till, sitting at the pinnacle of state,
The senate of the east his fiat wait.

With this full splendor is the youth array'd:
The Danube is the cradle of the maid:
In ancient Tomi born; her mother's name
Proud with ennobling spoils of martial fame.
From Celerinus' strength of soul her line
Draws down a track of light that shall for ages shine.
Defender of the Nile and Meroe named,
To him, when Parthia's blasting lightnings flamed
Round Carus' head, the soldier stretch'd in vain
The scepter'd rule, the liberty to reign.
He on the tumult look'd serenely down,
Prefer'd his tranquil ease, and scorn'd a crown.
He spurn'd th' obtruded power, which others claim,
Despite of nature's ties, with sword and flame:
Virtue the purple's majesty outshone,
And Grandeur blush'd on a rejected throne;
Fortune, already yielded to his arms,
Beheld him rise superior to her charms;
Great from the bended knee that hail'd his reign,
But greater, that he view'd it with disdain.
A chief of state the virgin's father shone;
And titled names were merged within his own:

Head of the martial bands, whose fame sublime
No hosts eclipse, that gild the rolls of time;
To all commission'd honours he decrees,
The lords of distant provinces o'ersees;
The empire's scatter'd strength in one combines,
Reviews the legions and their post assigns;
Marks out what bands shall guard Sarmatia's coasts,
The Saxons curb, or barb'rous Gothic hosts;
Confront the Scot, the ocean's shores confine,
Or with controuling force appease the Rhine.
A house unspotted, zealous, loyal, tried,
Discerning Stilicho selects the bride:
Words can no more of eulogy convey,
Nor more the wisdom of the choice display.
When such a maid resigns her virgin flower,
Dost thou not blush to waste the loitering hour?
Haste, Venus, haste, thy wing'd attendants call:
Thy nymphs and Graces rouze, convene them all:
I long to whirl the torch's quivering light,
Shake fading wreaths, and revel out the night.
Nor shall this pipe a worthless office lend,
Whose shrill response shall with the dances blend."

Scarce had he said, when Venus hastening laves
Her freshen'd limbs in cooling fountain waves;
Combs her dishevell'd locks in comely braid,
And smoothes her form, in slumber disarray'd;
Woven in Dione's loom her vesture swims,
And, prest in folds, enwraps her rounded limbs.
Flowers pave the car; the reins with flowers are twined;
The glossy doves with yoke of flowers confined;
The birds of song flock swift from every side,
That rang on Athesis', or Larius' tide:
Benacus' banks and Mincius' quiet stream,
Now mute, their warblings lost, deserted seem:
The flying swan dispeoples now the Po,
The shrill Padusan lakes in silence flow.
Among the clouds the fluttering Cupids play;
Keen on rein'd birds they lash their airy way:
All vaunt their agile skill in Venus' sight,
And foremost striving close in frolic fight;
Now skirmish; now dismounted here and there
Fall harmless on the soft and yielding air,
Rise from the fall, and with o'ershooting speed
The rider far outstrips his winged steed.

Now at the chamber door arrived, they fling
Inverted baskets, blushing with the Spring;
From hollow quivers showers of roses throw,
And rain the purple violets, that grow
In Venus' meads; which e'en the Dog star spares,
Nor on their tender fragrance withering glares.
Others from jewel'd caskets balms distil,
And liquid odours all the mansion fill.
Such balsams, as from unctuous wounds are shed,
Pierced by the nail when Ægypt's rind has bled.
Venus draws nigh: the bride she gently rears
On her chaste mother's lap suffused with tears:
Her breast in virgin ripeness swells and grows;
Her skin may vie with lilies and with snows;
Her tressed hair with yellow ringlets gleams,
And witnesses the Danube's native streams.
Then Venus joins the bride's and bridegroom's hands,
And sanctions with her willing voice the bands:
"Live in the constant harmony of Love,
And learn my secrets and my favours prove:
Let echoed kisses flush the maiden's face;
And arms turn livid with the strain'd embrace:

Let lips to lips your trembling breath unite,
And link your souls in one confused delight.
Nor in thy father's courage, youth! confide:
Not terror, but soft prayers, should bend the bride:
Nor thou with Scythian nails thy anger wreak;
But yield, dear maid! before thy conqueror weak:
A wife, a mother; why that pearly tear?
Trust me, you'll love the man whom now you fear."
She said; and summon'd from the winged band
Two Loves, of steadiest bow and truest hand.
Æthon, with Pyrois, from the circle springs;
Bedrop'd with crimson glance their dazzling wings:
Each in pure honey dip'd his feather'd dart,
One sought the bride's and one the bridegroom's heart:
Twanged the bent bows; in air the arrows shrill'd;
Glided with liquid track, and through their vitals thrill'd.

THE PHŒNIX.

Beyond the Ind and Orient blooms a wood
Wash'd by the verge of ocean's farthest flood:
On the green grove the coursers of the sun
First snorting breathe, or ere their race they run:
There first his golden scourge the dew-drops flings,
When to the pearly car the portal rings:
Whence Day looks blushing forth; and wan-faced Night
Shrinks from the whirling wheels that blaze with light;
Feels the warm breath upon her visage blow,
And, gathering up her robe, is seen to vanish slow.
Here, far too blest, the solar bird sublime
Dwells, safe-embosom'd in the burning clime;
His lonely reign, untouch'd by birds that fly,
Or beasts that creep in frail mortality;
Free from the human world's contagious breath,
A bird, like heavenly beings, charm'd from death.
With stars endures the creature's vivid day;
His frame renew'd sees ages waste away.

No ripening dainties sate his hungering bill;
Nor with slaked thirst he tastes the gushing rill:
Nourish'd with sunbeams and the ocean spray,
He sips aerial food, and drinks the day.
Keen from his eyes the secret splendours break;
A fiery glory reddens round his beak;
His crested head a sun-like diadem rears
Whose plume's ray'd light the parted darkness clears:
His legs are tinged with crimson's Tyrian dye;
His sweeping wings before the breezes fly;
Cærulean colours paint their feather'd fold,
Blue as a flower, and rich with sprinkled gold.
From no seed quicken'd, no conception's fire,
Son to himself, and of himself the sire:
His life-worn body vegetates in death:
Alternate funerals teem with vital breath,
When thousand summers have their circuit wound,
Winters rush'd by, and springs absolved their round;
Restoring to the culture-loving swain
The foliage strew'd by autumn on the plain;

Weigh'd down by years, the Phœnix feels at length
The numerous lustres pressing on his strength:
So the tall pine-tree, rock'd by many a gale,
Stoops from the Scythian mountains to the vale:
Drawn by its headlong weight, still downward bends,
And tottering to a fall, in air impends:
Bow'd by strong whirlwinds, riven with eating rains,
Hollow'd with cankering age, it topples on the plains.
Now droop the flamy splendours of his beak:
His star of sight frozen, languid, glazed, and weak:
As when the moon is wrapt in misty shades,
And with her doubtful crescent glimmering fades.
Those wings, that soaring cleaved the clouds of air,
Scarce from the dust their lifted plumage bear.
Then, conscious of his age expired, he rears
The teeming nest of his reviving years;
From mountains, basking in the sunny blaze,
Culls the parch'd grasses, and the arid sprays;
Heaps Saba's leaves, and cinnamon's perfume,
And weaves in one his cradle and his tomb.
On this he brooding sits; salutes the sun;
And shrill implores, while faint his moments run:

And asks with suppliant song the quickening flame,
Whose vital strength may renovate his frame.
Phœbus discerns his foster-child from far,
Consoles the pious bird, and stays his car.
" Oh thou! whose age the death-pile shall consume;
Whose birth from that illusive grave shall bloom;
Whose expiration yields reviving breath;
Whose youth still blossoms from the dust of death;
Receive new birth; thy bloodless frame resign;
And rise transform'd with shape more bright than thine."

He spoke: and, from his bending neck, in air
Shook one bright ringlet of his golden hair;
And smote the bird, that gasp'd in faint desire,
With vital brightness of infusing fire.
The willing bird in conflagration dies,
Parts to return, and setting hastes to rise.
The fragrant pile, beneath heaven's darted rays
Smokes, and the aged bird consumes within the blaze.
The Moon her shining heifers checks on high,
And moveless hang the axles of the sky.
Nature with terror views the teeming pyre
Lest her eternal bird be lost in fire;

And warns the faithful flames to yield again
The glory of the world, the bird of deathless strain.
Through the strewn parts a rolling vapour glows:
Warm through the veins the blood relapsing flows:
The ashes, panting into life, are stir'd,
And plumage clothes the embers of the bird.
The sire springs forth, regenerate in the flame,
Himself the son: another, and the same.
The fire with slender bound'ry waves between
The life which is, and that which late has been.
Straight joys the bird to consecrate the pile,
And bear the father-ashes to the Nile.
Depositing, on Ægypt's Pharian earth,
The spicy heap that warm'd him into birth.
Swift to the foreign hemisphere he glides,
Bearing the dust which twisted herbage hides:
Innumerable birds his flight attend;
Or, as he flies, their balanced wings suspend:
From tracks of air a feather'd army springs,
And throng his passage with a cloud of wings.
Of all their thousands none advance before,
But, as their guide, the fragrant king adore.

Him e'en the thunder-clasping eagle spares;
Awed into peace, the hawk his prey forbears.
So, where the Tigris chafes his yellow sands,
The Parthian marshals his barbaric bands:
Glorying in rich array, and many a gem,
He binds his brow with regal diadem:
His foaming courser champs the bit of gold;
The purple stains his garment's trailing fold;
Assyrian needles flower the broider'd vest;
Proud o'er the slavish troop he lifts his haughty crest.
A solar city, famed for placid rite
Through Ægypt's borders, hails the Power of light:
On hundred columns propt the fane reclines,
Hewn from the Theban mountain's granite mines:
Thither the bird is borne, as fame has told;
There lays the father-dust which herbs infold;
Bends on the visage of the sun his gaze,
And in the flame his spicy burthen lays;
There in the solar altar's hallowing fire
The relics of himself, and seeds of life, expire.
With clouds of myrrh the glimmering temple breathes,
And heavenly smoke the curling altar wreathes.

Far as Pelusium's lakes, the human sense
Is thrill'd with fumes of Indic frankincense:
In vapour of salubrious fragrance drown'd,
Men bless the mist that wraps their spirits round:
The sable tribes, where Nile's branch'd waters flow,
Feel gales more sweet than nectar round them blow.

Heir of thyself! still ever blessed be!
What snaps our mortal thread is strength to thee.
Thy being springs from ashes and from fires;
And life in thee survives, while age expires.
Whate'er has been thou saw'st; and ages fly
For ever rolling to thy conscious eye.
Thou knew'st when ocean heaved its bursting flood,
And floating rocks beneath the waters stood.
Thou knew'st what year, along th' ethereal way,
Saw Phaeton in blazing error stray:
But thee Destruction claims not as her own:
Earth is a grave, but thou survivest alone:
The Fates in vain would spin thy mortal hour;
For thou art harmless, and defiest their power.

LOVES OF THE MAGNET.

WHOE'ER can trace the world's retreating laws,
And search with reasoning eyes each latent cause:
Whence the moon darkens; the pale sun decays;
Or comets red with dismal tresses blaze;
Whence flow the winds; earth heaves with trembling womb,
Or lightning flashes rive the yawning gloom:
Whence clouds the pealing thunders lengthening roll,
Or florid rainbows paint with light the pole:
He, if the reach of mind can ere attain
To aught of truth, may these my doubts explain.
Earth yields a substance as the magnet known;
A mean, and dusky, and discolour'd stone:
Not the sleek'd locks of kings this stone confines,
Nor round the white neck of the virgin shines;
Nor holds with glittering fangs her buckled zone:
But mark the wonders of the dusky stone,
And jewels fade; and gems are bright no more,
By Indian's cull'd on ocean's ruddy shore.

From iron's touch the stone is seen to feel
A stirring life, and banquets on the steel.
From iron's touch its vital force renews;
Feels the hard aliment new strength infuse:
Its absence sad in pining death deplores,
With famish'd frame, and thirst consumes its pores.
Mars, who with bloody speär the cities smites,
And Venus, soothing care with love's delights,
Hold in the gilded fane their common shrine;
But not alike their images divine.
The form of Mars an iron statue gleams:
The gem magnetic, shaped as Venus, beams.
The priest performs the wonted marriage-rite,
And torches lead the choir with sparkling light.
The branchy walls with festal myrtle bound
Sprout into leaves, and bud in fragrance round:
Soft swells the couch, with heapy roses strown;
The bridal purple o'er the bed is thrown.
A miracle succeeds: then Venus proves
The mimic clasp of heaven's remember'd loves.
Snatches her spouse, that to her bosom springs,
To his glued breast with warmth soft-breathing clings:

Bears his prest weight, draws down his helmed brows,
And clip'd in live embracements closer grows.
He, inly stirr'd, the long-breathed sigh obeys,
Link'd by his consort-gem in mystic maze:
Nature consigns the bride; air weds with steel;
Secret, as sudden, are the bonds they feel.

What heat infused the mutual metals binds
And blends in concord these obdurate minds?
With kindling warmth the flinty substance glows,
In secret pants its breathing fervour flows,
From the keen touch a wounding softness proves,
And the bland steel relents in conscious loves.

So Venus with her smiling mien subdues
War's grisly God, and blandishingly woos:
When, rushing hot with thirst of blood, he stands,
Two naked falchions gleaming in his hands:
Alone she runs before his pawing steeds;
His throbbing heart's wild current calm'd recedes:
Soft with her tempering flame she soothes his breast;
And his fierce spirit languishes in rest:
He quits the field, where warm the battle bled,
And to her kisses stoops his crested head.

Dread boy! what power is thine? heaven's bolts are vain;
Transform'd the Thunderer bellows through the main;
Thou strikest the frigid rock; through statue limbs,
Senseless of life thy lightning fluid skims;
Stones catch thy warmth; love melts in iron's veins,
And in th' unyielding marble burns and reigns.

THE OLD MAN OF VERONA.

BLEST is the man who, in his father's fields,
Has past an age of quiet. The same roof,
That screen'd his cradle, yields a shelter now
To his grey hairs. He leans upon a staff,
Where, as a child, he crept along the ground;
And, in one cottage, he has number'd o'er
A length of years. Him Fortune has not drawn
Into her whirl of strange vicissitudes;
Nor has he drunk, with ever-changing home,
From unknown rivers. Never on the deep,
A merchant, has he trembled at the storm;
Nor, as a soldier, started at the blare
Of trumpets; nor endured the noisy strife
Of the hoarse-clamouring bar: of the great world
Simply unconscious. To the neighbouring town
A stranger, he enjoys the free expanse
Of open heaven. The old man marks his year,
Not by the names of Consuls, but computes
Time by his various crops: by apples notes
The autumn; by the blooming flower the spring.

From the same field he sees his daily sun
Go down, and lift again its reddening orb;
And, by his own contracted universe,
The rustic measures the vast light of day.
He well remembers that broad massive oak,
An acorn; and has seen the grove grow old,
Coeval with himself. Veronä seems
To him more distant than the swarthy Ind:
He deems the lake Benacus like the shores
Of the red gulph. But his a vigour hale,
And unabated: he has now outlived
Three ages: though a grandsire, green in years,
With firm and sinewy arms. The traveller
May roam to farthest Spain: he more has known
Of earthly space; the old man more of life.

AVIENUS.

Aft. Ch. 402.

ÆSOPIAN FABLES.
EPIGRAMS.

Of Rufus Festus Avienus no particulars are known. Chronologers make him about contemporary with Claudian: but as his Apologues are dedicated to Theodosius the elder, the father of Honorius, his poems claim priority to those of Claudian; and his date would be more properly placed at Aft. Ch. 379. As a fabulist, critics have been in haste to discover that he is inferior to Phædrus; but they have forgotten to allow him his proper merit, as a neat and agreeable writer. He translated Aratus and Dionysius Periegetes; and paraphrased the decads of Livy in Iambic verse.

AVIENUS.

THE OAK AND THE REED.

From mountain summits, by the roots uptorn,
Down rush'd an oak, on madding whirlwind borne;
A stream, that wound beneath its swelling course,
Received, and, hurrying, snatch'd with eddying force.
Impell'd from bank to bank, the ponderous freight
Now on a bed of reeds reposed its weight;
And, clinging to a turf, that edged the flood,
Admired, how firm the watery bulrush stood:
That *his* vast trunk should topple from its height,
And the slim stem resist the tempest's might.
The reed with slender whisperings bland replies,
"In this my weakness, know, my safety lies.
Thou scorn'st the storm and buffetest the blast,
And thy whole strength to earth is prostrate cast;
I, soft and slow, the rising gusts delay,
And, provident, give every gale its way.

The blast, that smites thy gnarled strength, but plies
With my light motions, dallies, sports, and dies."
Brunt not events, these whisper'd warnings say,
Stern Fortune's threats shall soften from delay.

ON A QUIET LIFE.

SMALL fields are mine; a small and guiltless rent;
In both I prize the quiet of content.
My mind maintains its peace; from feverish dread
Secure, and fear of crimes, that sloth has bred.
Others let toilsome camps or curule chairs
Invite, and joys which vain ambition shares.
May I, my lot among the people thrown,
The badge of rank unsought for and unknown,
Live to myself, and call my time my own.

COUNTRY RETIREMENT.

SAFE-ROOF'D my cottage; swelling rich with wine
Hangs from the twisted elm my cluster'd vine.
Boughs glow with cherries; apples bend my wood;
And the crush'd olive foams with juicy flood.
Where my light beds the scattering rivulet drink,
My simple pot-herbs flourish on the brink;
And poppies smiling wave the rosy head,
That yield no opiate to a restless bed.
If for the birds I weave the limed snare,
Or for the startlish deer the net prepare,
Or with a slender thread the fish delude,
No other wiles disturb these woodlands rude.
Go now, and barter life's calm stealing days
For pompous suppers, that with luxury blaze;
Pray heaven! for me the lot may thus be cast,
And future time glide peaceful as the past.

RUTILIUS.

Aft. Chr. 417.

THE ITINERARY.

RUTILIUS Claudius Numatianus was a native of Gaul. His father was proconsul of Tuscany. He flourished under Honorius, and wrote his poem after the execution of Stilicho, and the sacking of Rome by Alaric. He had filled the office of consul, and held the dignities of prefect of the city, military tribune, and prefect of the pretorian court. He has been scrupulously attentive to record these particulars, together with the year of Rome in which he wrote, as if with a view to posterity. It is re-

markable that he sides with the court party against Claudian's patron, Stilicho; and joins in the charge of his inviting the invasion of the Goths. The Itinerary, or Journal of a Voyage from Rome to Gaul, is in two books: of the latter only a short fragment remains. It is a chorographical poem interspersed with occasional reflections. Commentators have pleasantly accused Rutilius of irreligion, because he dislikes the Jews and the Christian monks. This is to quarrel with a Roman because he is a heathen. How this Roman nobleman was to become acquainted with the merits of Judaism, they forgot to inform us. The Jews were always an isolated people. Their institutions were designed to repel the Gentile intercourse. They were the depositaries of the most ancient histories; of miraculous events and revelations; and of the grand truth of the unity of God: and they were guarded and hemmed round from the approach of idolatrous nations. But further—in the time of Rutilius, the prediction of Jesus had long been verified: their city was destroyed; and their tribes were dispersed: the more ancient

prediction of Moses was also literally fulfilled. "They were become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye word among all the nations:" Deut. ch. xxviii. v. 37. and it is not extraordinary that Rutilius should have despised a Jew. If in regarding the sabbath as "the effeminate image of a wearied God," Rutilius confound cessation from creative energy with the necessity of rest; if he overlook the usefulness and importance of the sabbatical institution, with reference to the apportionment of time, the beneficial respite from labour, and the perpetuated commemoration of the existence of a creator; it must be said that he was a heathen. The same answer applies to his alleged enmity to Christianity. But what was the christianity which excited the enmity, or rather the philosophical contempt, of Rutilius? In that age the sophistications from simple christianity had already struck root: the sect, explicitly foretold by Paul, in his first epistle to Timotheus, that "should forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats," had already sprung up; and these pretended christian establisments were monastic institutions.

There is something extremely novel and interesting in this diary of a nobleman of Rome, containing his careless remarks on what he saw, and his loose memoranda on what he thought, cast in the form of verse, with a gentlemanly and scholar-like facility, in some interval of leisure from high official duties. The narrative is easy and unambitious, the sentiments are striking, and the images pleasing. The style has none of the tawdriness of Claudian, but exhibits the terse and simple elegance of an Augustan writer. It appears from Suetonius, that a poem of a similar nature to this of Rutilius had been written by Cæsar, on his way to the Spanish war; with the title of Iter, or the Journey.

RUTILIUS.

COAST OF ETRURIA.

IGILIUM's woody heights my wonder raise,
Nor shall my verse defraud it of its praise:
The genius of the soil, or guardian power
Of Rome's high lord preserved in danger's hour
Its native thickets; and the foe withstood
With narrow frith, as with an ocean's flood.
And hither from the shatter'd city fled
Rome's refuged exiles, breathing from their dread.
The Gothic horsemen in their naval might
Had swept the seas, and waged unnatural fight;
One wonderous haven lent a sheltering home,
Far from the conquering Goth, yet near to Rome.
We touch on Umbro, no ignoble tide;
In whose safe mouth the storm-scared vessels ride:
So smooth the channel spreads its easy plain,
When the fierce tempest rushes on the main.

I sought to anchor in this tranquil bay,
But that our eager crew forbade delay.
Thus hastening on our course, at once the wind
Fell to a calm, the parting light declined;
Nor could we stretch before the onward gale,
Nor yet returning bend the backward sail.
By night, we quarter on the sandy shore,
And myrtle groves for evening homes explore.
With oars up-prop'd on oars we rear a shed,
The pole, transversely, roofs it over-head.
With dawn, we row'd along the calmy tide,
Yet felt no motion, though the oars we plied.
Gazing the deep, the vessel seem'd to stand;
Her course was seen from the receding land.
Ilva appears, for mines of steel renown'd,
No richer metal lurks in Noric ground,
From Biturix' capacious furnace flows,
Or massive in Sardonian caverns grows.
Better the soil that teems with iron ore,
Than yellow sand on Tagus' gravelly shore;
For deadly gold of vice the basis lays;
The lust of gold to every crime betrays:

For golden bribes is nuptial honour sold,
In virgin bosoms slides the shower of gold:
Gold can the fenced town's allegiance buy;
Court-favours grow from golden infamy.
But iron tills the waste and weed-grown soil;
And sustenance is reap'd from iron toil.
The demi-gods, while pure from human blood,
With iron quell'd the monsters of the wood:
Nature's unweapon'd hands their use deny,
Till tools of iron other hands supply.
Such thoughts beguile the weary calm, as round
The crew's vile clamours variously resound.

Our loosen'd course the near Falernia ends,
Though scarce the sun the middle sky ascends.
There, as it chanced, the village streets among,
Did sacred sports unbend the rustic throng.
Osiris' renovated form again
With joyful harvests crown'd the teeming plain.

We leave the village, hoist the sail, and glide
O'er slimy sands, a mere's delicious tide.
The waves, inclosed, with free expansion stray
In the wide pool the wanton fishes play:

But ill repaid the pleasant station's ease;
Its keeper churlish as Antiphates.
A Jew secures the lake, of querulous mood;
An animal estranged from human food;
Imputes the trespass of our crying deeds;
The tasted wave, torn shrubs, and trodden weeds.
With due retort, our jests revile the name
Of the foul race of mutilated shame;
Root of fond folly, who their Sabbaths hold,
With hearts, as is their superstition, cold;
Who each seventh day in sloth ignobly lie,
Soft image of a wearied deity.
What other doating dreams these felons own,
Not boys would credit, or but boys alone.
And oh! that e'er Judæa vanquish'd lay
By Pompey's wars, or crouch'd to Titus' sway!
With wide contagion creeps th' outrooted pest,
The conquerors by the conquer'd tribe opprest.
Adverse the North-wind rises; but, as day
Hides the pale stars, we sweep the watery way
With bending oars; till Populonia yields
Its natural bay, that winds into the fields.

No watch-tower there, on deep foundations raised,
High-seen in air, with nightly splendour blazed;
But age had worn the solid rocks away,
And insulated one with slow decay:
One rock, a natural beacon, spiring stood,
And overtop'd the subjugated flood.
A two-fold use the castled cliff supplied—
An inland fortress, and an ocean guide.
Sunk are the monuments of ages past,
Time's eating canker has consumed the last:
Of walls long raised faint vestiges are found,
And roofs inearth'd with ruins heave the ground.
If human dissolution prompt the sigh,
Lo! cities, e'en as men, are doom'd to die.
When shifts the North, we hoist the sail with speed,
While shines the Dawn-star on his rosy steed.
Next its dim mountains Corsica display'd,
Their cloud-capt heads were blended into shade;
As fades the dubious moon with crescent light,
And veil'd in gloom eludes the straining sight.
Capraria rises, as our course we run;
The foul isle swarms with men who fly the sun:

Self-call'd the Grecian name of Monks they own,
Who chuse to live unwitness'd and alone.
They fortune's wrongs and gifts with terror see,
And all are wretched, lest they wretched be:
What rage more senseless can pervert the brain,
Through dread of ill no blessing to sustain?
Past crimes these dungeon-slaves in penance rue,
Or from black gall their melancholy grew:
Homer this atrabilious cause assign'd
To sad Bellerophon's desponding mind;
Pierced by the darts of grief, the youth began
With morbid hate to loathe the sight of man.

Nonnus.

NONNUS.

Fifth Century.

THE DIONYSIACS.

NONNUS Panopolites was so named from Panopolis in Ægypt, the city of his birth. Nothing further is known of him than that he undertook an embassy into Æthiopia, of which he wrote an account. Exclusive of the Dionysiacs, he is the author of an elegant poetical paraphrase of the Gospel of John.

The poem of Dionysiacs is in forty-eight books; and takes its title from Dionusus, or Bacchus, who is the most prominent figure in the piece, and is

the centre round which the general system of these pagan fables appears to turn. The work, from its very nature, has nothing of the regular dependance and connection of epic composition. It is a confused, but magnificent, assemblage of the emblematical legends of Ægypt; the cradle of the ancient mythology; and it is not surprising that the modern inquirers into the religion and literature of India should have discovered an affinity between the fabulous theology of Nonnus, and that of the Hindoo mythologists.

In the ostentation of what is called classical taste, critics have affected to depreciate this poem; and Moréri, (Dictionnaire Historique) with that insensibility to the higher poetry of the imagination, which is characteristic of the French school of criticism, has censured it in contemptuous terms, as departing from the pure simplicity of Homer. What would be thought of a critic who should institute a comparison between Ovid's Metamorphoses and the Æneid? The classes of poetry are distinct. It is to the Metamorphoses that the Dionysiacs can alone in fairness, be resembled. Nonnus indeed

resembles Ovid in his exuberance of imagery; his amatory softness; his excess of wit; and his refining minuteness and redundancy of description: but he far surpasses him in creative grandeur, and a beautiful wildness of fancy; in the romantic spirit of his narrations; in strongly circumstantiated painting; and in that poetic enthusiasm which breathes passion and interest even into the most extravagant fictions.

NONNUS.

JUPITER ENAMOURED OF SEMELE,
WHILE BATHING IN THE RIVER ASOPUS.

THERE laved the maid her limbs; her damsels too
Plunged in the river: swift she skim'd the wave
With oaring hand, and with experienced skill
Rear'd high her head unwetted by the tide;
Laid her bathed bosom level on the flood,
And with alternate feet behind her threw
The waters. Nor escaped she, while she swam,
Jove's all-discerning eye; but, suddenly
Appearing from on high, he roll'd around
His boundless orb of vision: opposite
Stood Love; and on the father, gazing thus,
Th' incomprehensible archer drew in air
His bow: the flower-wreathed weapon glanced a light
As the stretch'd bow-string quiver'd: bent the bow,
Th' instinctive arrow shrill'd a Bacchic sound;

Jove was the mark; and, mighty as he was,
To that poor urchin Love bow'd down his neck.
The arrow, gliding like a falling star,
Flew, whispering nuptial sounds, and pierced the heart
Of Jove, by subtle indirect approach,
Grazing the bending thigh with wavering wound,
Aslant; prognostic of the birth to come.
Then Jove his mutable and rolling eye,
Moist-swimming with necessity of love,
Bent on the damsel; like a scourge he felt
The cestus of her loveliness. He look'd
On Semele, and panted in alarm,
Lest he should recognize beside those banks
Another fair Europa, and again
His heart throb wild for a Phœnician maid.
For Semele was moulded in the form
Of elegance; the beauty of her race
Shone in her forehead. Jupiter now changed
His wily form; and, by the virgin smit,
Soar'd like an eagle o'er Asopus' flood;
And bore the image of the eagle's eye
With vision keenly radiant; and he left

The fields of ether and approach'd the banks,
Measuring with fixed glance that naked shape
Veil'd by her flowing tresses. Nor the wish
Was his to gaze at distance, but to gaze
O'er all the nigh-appearing nymph's bare limbs
Of glowing white; nor deem'd he that the scope
So keen, so vast, of that orbicular eye,
Roll'd in immensity, and with a glance
Girding the world, sufficed to gaze on one
Of unyoked nature, a mere mortal maid.
The waters, dark from depth, transparent blush'd
With crimsoning lustre of her rosy limbs;
The river-mead became an amorous scene,
Whose waters in voluptuous dalliance flash'd
Graces like lightnings from their dimpling waves:
The Naiad, wreathed with nodding sedges, look'd,
And half-exclaiming held her tranced breath.

NICÆA.

With crooked bow, a dweller of the woods
Was there; a nymph who, nourish'd on the grape,
Bloom'd in the forest's leafy wilderness:
Fair-shaped Nicæa, huntress of the swift,
A second Dian, strange to love: untaught
The rites of Venus, she with arrows chased
The beasts, and track'd the mountains. No soft bower
Of maidens chamber'd her in green recess,
With fragrant foliage hid; but in a place
Of rocks, a desert haunt, in gloomy glen
She dwelt. Her spindle was the bending bow;
Her threads the feather'd arrows; and, with poles
Of meshy nets, this mountain Pallas spread
The web: more pleased to weave the close-wrought lines
Of wonted chase on snare-set rocks, the whilst
Following the chaste and arrow-shooting queen,
Her comrade of the forest. Ne'er her dart

Had touch'd the feeble dappled fawn, nor struck
The fugitive scared deer, nor trembling hare.
She harness'd lions to the yoke, and lash'd
Their shaggy backs with blood-discoloured thong;
Blaming Diana, that she left the race
Of mottled panthers, and the lion kind,
And rein'd the silly deer. Nor reck'd the nymph
Th' anointing oil of fragrance; and her cup,
With honey-temper'd draught, she dip'd in streams,
Cold-gushing from the torrent. In a cave,
Arch'd in the natural rock, her mansion was,
'Midst desert hill-crags inaccessible:
And oft, o'erwearied by the running chase,
She sate beside the panthers; or, beneath
The hollow rock, in mid-noon, lay at length,
Where the recumbent lioness had teem'd
With her young lion; but the gentle beast
Smooth'd its rough brows in blandishment, and
lick'd
The maiden's limbs, and sheath'd its bending claws,
That mangled not her flesh in the dreadful mouth.
E'en of the littering lioness, those jaws
Devouring, like a dog's, in querulous joy

Skim'd, fondly moaning with forbearing lips,
And touch'd her without harm. The lion's self,
Deeming her Dian, trail'd his head on earth
Suppliant; and bow'd his shaggy-ruffled mane
Low at her feet. A mountain-nurtured youth
Haunted those forests, straight in firm-paced walk,
High-statured, taller, though of equal age:
Hymnus his name; and midst those woodlands wild
He fed his fair herds near the neighbouring maid;
And, while his comely hands wielded the crook,
Fell in deep love; nor longer took delight
In flocks; like young Anchises, rosy-cheek'd,
When his white herd of mountain-pastured bulls
Venus beside him fed, and drove afield,
With robe high-girded. Thus the herdsman saw
The maid of snowy skin, amidst the woods
Hunting alone; nor reck'd he of the herd.
The heifer in the desert marshes fed
Wandering at will, her former herdsman left
To his ill-fortuned love. Among the rocks
Leap'd wild the calf, and sought the herdsman swain.
Meantime the youthful herdsman went astray,

And fix'd his gaze upon the virgin's face,
Whose cheeks with rosy circles tinted glow'd;
And wily Love with irritating stings
Harass'd his eager breast. When flew the nymph
In the hot rushing chase, with skimming feet,
Trackless in speed, the light breeze swam in folds
O'er all her floating vesture, and the charms
Of her fine shape glow'd full upon the view.
Her smooth round limbs were ivory; tinged with rose
Her tapering ankles; blush'd the snowy skin
O'er all her form, and as a meadow bloom'd
Of roses and anemonies: and there
The youthful lover, with insatiate eyes,
Saw the smooth pillars of her rounded limbs
Freed from their flimsy covering; and the wind
Waved from the roots her hair, that flow'd behind,
And parting lifted at a breath: the neck,
White-dazzling, through the lifted locks appear'd.
Oft did the mountain-wandering youth attend
The maiden handling now her nets or bow,
Or her poised hunting-spear that darted love.
The lovely damsel's fingers rosy-tip'd

He gazed upon, when aiming the swift shaft,
She bent the stringed bow, and bared her arm;
And stealthily with sidelong glance, he gazed
On her white shoulder, as she launch'd the spear.
Rolling his eyes around, that drank in streams
Of love with every look, he mused, in doubt
If white-arm'd Juno with Nicæa vied:
Then turn'd them towards the western skies, and sought
If less transparent than the virgin's skin
The fair moon shone; and, deep within his heart
Still cherishing his amorous wound, the youth
When near her, or apart, remember'd him
Of all her comely acts. How aim'd the nymph
Her light-poised javelin 'gainst the mountain bear;
How with the lion's skin she bound her hand,
Round her bare arms, in witness of her spoils,
Winding its girth; and how, while sultry heat
Bedew'd her limbs, she plunged in fountain stream
Her half-appearing form; and, more than all,
Bethought him of her robe; when snatch'd the wind
Its ruffled folds, and lifting to the waist,
Bared to the sight her beauty's grace and flower.

Fill'd with the dear remembrance, he besought
The gentle storms to breathe, and raise again
That robe, loose floating in its sinuous folds.
The youth, inconstant to his horned herd,
Gazed on the neighbouring huntress' maid, so tall
With her proud-bridled neck; and, twixt his lips,
Thus inly murmured with an envious tone:
" Oh might I be transform'd into a dart,
Or net, or quiver! might I be the spear
That slays the creatures of the woods, high-poised
By her bare arm! or, more than all, the thong
Of the slung bow, that o'er her back is cast:
So might she draw me to her snowy breast,
And to her modest girdle closely strain!"

BACCHUS AND HIS ARMY

ON THE BANKS OF THE HYDASPES.

WHEN, at the ford of waters, rolling clear
O'er glittering sands, the countless infantry
Of Bacchus stood, where, like the Nile, pours down
Indic Hydaspes' whirlpool-deepening wave
His navigable stream; then chanted rose
The song of Bacchic women: all the band
Of shaggy Satyrs howl'd with mystic voice,
Preluding to the Phrygian minstrelsy
Of nightly orgies. Earth around them laugh'd;
The rocks re-echoed; shouts of revelling joy
Shrill'd from the Naiads; and the river-nymphs
Sent echoes from their whirlpool-circled tides,
Flowing in silence; and, beneath the rocks,
Chaunted Sicilian songs, like preludes sweet,
That, through the warbling throats of Syren nymphs,
Most musical, drop honey from their tongues.
Shouts rang through all the grove; instinctive oaks
Grew vocal, and an airy music breathed,
Like murmuring flutes. The Dryads mix'd their cries

Of jubilee; and, midst thick-foliaged boughs,
The wood-nymph, half-appearing, look'd from high,
And caroll'd on the tree. The flowing brook
Turn'd white with snowy milk, though in itself
A spring of waters. In the torrent's bed,
The Naiads laved their limbs in milky streams,
And drank the snowy milk. The steepy rock
Was purpled; spouting must of rilling grapes
From the red nipple of the shrubless stone,
And founts of pleasant beverage; and distill'd
From its spontaneous clefts the luscious gifts
Of honey-dropping bees, that wanted not
Combs in the rock; and, from new-bursting shoots,
The downless apple started into growth
Upon the prickly thorn. Minerva's tree
Was sprinkled, o'er its olive-budding boughs,
With Bacchic juice, that gush'd in unprest rills.
Hares fondling clip'd the joyous-bounding dogs;
The trailing serpents, frantic-revelling, writhed
Among their orgies, licking with soft tongues
The print of Bacchus' footsteps, whose loose locks
Were wreathed with twining snakes; and bent their
necks,

One on another sliding flexible,
And with soft hissings swell'd their jocund throats.
With whisper'd music of intelligence
Sigh'd the delighted dragon, rolling long
His scaly folds around the fearless feet
Of Bacchus; and the tigers, springing round,
Gambol'd on Indian rocks. In depth of woods
The troops of mountain-pastured elephants
Wanton'd in heavy leaps; wood-satyrs frisk'd,
Rambling on many a precipice's edge,
And with light hoof o'erskimming crags, whose height
Shivers the gazer's frame; where the bold bird,
That fleetest traveller, never tower'd in flight,
Nor with the double oaring of his wings
Measured the inaccessible ascent.
Shaking the ruffled mane upon his neck
Came vaulting forth the lion; and the boar,
Haunting beside him the same forest glade,
Uncouthly leap'd in cadence. Birds their notes
Shrill trumpeted, and imaged human sounds,
Feigning with their imperfect mimickry
A shout, and chaunting loud the victory strain

Of Indian-slaying battles; whilst in air,
From their green bodies, with unfolded length,
They stretch'd their sweepy plumes. With emulous spring
Ran the high-flying panther, and the bear
Roll'd from the wood. Diana sudden check'd
Her spotted dogs, half-stretching on the start,
And gently gazed upon the lioness
Whirling his car; that bounded as in dance
Upon the shaken earth; and, charm'd, she loosed
Her crescent-rounding bow, that bashful hung,
Lest the fledged arrow pierce the woodland beasts.
And there, some Indian in the wood, who saw
The scene of wonders, throwing out his glance
Through the thick foliage of some topmost bough,
Cover'd his eyes with screening hand, and left
Such scope of vision, as with narrow'd glimpse,
Peers through a grated helmet's fictious eyes;
So, skulking underneath the shady wood,
Did some astonish'd man the wonderous scene
Sudden discern, with stealthy-gazing face.

MUSÆUS.

Fifth Century.

HERO AND LEANDER.

English Translators:

MARLOE, STAPYLTON, EUSDEN, FAWKES.

THE name of Musæus, an ancient poet, and priest of Ceres, supposed to have preceded Homer, and to have flourished about 1180 Bef. Ch. frequently occurs in the classic authors; but not the slightest probability attaches to the romantic notion that the poem of Hero and Leander is the production of that very Musæus: although Julius Scaliger, while preferring it to the works of Homer, affects to trace from it some of the finest passages

in the Iliad and Odyssey. The circumstance of Onomacritus having sold to the Athenians certain professed oracular verses of Musæus, has led to the surmise that he was the author of this poem; but the Orphic pieces, also ascribed to him, are totally dissimilar in style.—The Hero and Leander exhibits that refinement of sentiment, and that sparkling antithetical ornament, which are the indications of modern composition. On a comparison of the style with that of the writers in the fifth century, the poem is judged to belong to that æra, and appears to be the work of a grammarian, or professor of letters; as this title is superscribed on the ancient copies after the name of Musæus. It is a beautiful and impassioned production; combining in its love-details the warmth and luxuriance of Ovid with the delicate and graceful nature of Apollonius; and, in the peril and tumult of the catastrophe, rising to the gloomy grandeur of Homeric description.

MUSÆUS.

HERO AND LEANDER.

The torch that witness'd stealthy loves, and him
Who dared, with ocean-wandering nuptials, swim
The midnight surge; embraces veil'd in shade,
That ne'er the morn's immortal eyes survey'd;
Abydos; Sestos; where sweet Hero lay,
A bride, unconscious of the blush of day;
Oh Goddess tell!—I hear the heaven-breathed strain;
Leander swims athwart th' opposing main;
The torch in splendour kindles from above,
Announcing bliss, and harbingering love.
Bright messenger, in midnight's gloomy hour,
Of the sweet bride who decks her nightly bower!
Torch! symbol of delight! th' ethereal sire
Should midst the sister stars translate thy fire;
And, for thy nightly ministry, approve
Thy name, the star of bride-adoring love:

Whose light could minister to amorous woes,
And the glad sign of wakeful joys disclose;
Or ere the wind with hostile breathings came,
And blew the heavy blast that quench'd thy flame.
Come—be the themes of song together sped;
The torch extinguish'd, and Leander dead.

Opposing, Sestos and Abydos stood;
Two neighbouring cities parted by the flood.
At both, sure-aiming, Cupid fledged the dart;
Here fired a youth's, and there a virgin's heart:
This on Abydos', that on Sestos' shore:
Leander, Hero, were the names they bore.
The lovely youth and maid were known afar,
Each of their native town the beauteous star,
In graces match'd: if thither tend your way,
Inquire the turret whence the torch-light ray
Usher'd the youth, while stood the maid on high;
Or let the surge-reechoing frith reply
Of old Abydos, that with hollow roar
Shall yet Leander's love and death deplore.
Whence did this dweller of Abydos burn
With Hero's love? and she his flame return?

The graceful virgin, of a noble strain,
As priestess minister'd in Venus' fane:
From wedlock strange; within a sea-beat tower,
Far from her parents, in her bashful flower,
She chastely dwelt; herself, so lovely seen,
Another Venus, and a heavenly queen:
But mix'd not with the blithe-assembling fair,
Nor midst the youthful dancers skim'd in air:
She shun'd the curious glance of female eyes,
And women's beauty-kindled jealousies:
Still to propitiate Venus fondly strove,
And soothed with frankincense the Power of Love.
She fear'd his quiver'd flames, his mother's arts,
Yet could not so escape his fiery darts.

Now the throng'd festival of Venus came,
By Sestians held to fair Adonis' fame:
From farthest isles, encircled by the main,
Flock'd to the gaudy day a countless train;
From Cyprus' wave-wash'd rocks, and green Hæmonia's plain.
No woman in Cythera's cities staid,
Nor one on hills of Libanus delay'd:

Where dancers twine midst cedar-fragrant glades;
Fair Phrygians haste, and near Abydos' maids.
No maid-enamour'd youths are then away;
Who still the rumour'd festival obey.
They bring no incense to the immortal shrine;
But seek the maids who there assembled shine.
Now Hero walk'd the fane with virgin grace,
A shining beauty lightening from her face:
As white the moon emerges to the view
With her clear visage of transparent hue:
Such Hero's cheek; but on those cheeks of snow,
Were two vermilion circles seen to glow:
The scarlet and the milky rose appear'd,
As from the velvet sheath their buds they rear'd:
And he, that look'd on Hero's limbs, had said,
That meads of roses there their colours spread.
Soft blush'd her tinted limbs; her ankles glow'd
With roses, as the robe's white drapery flow'd,
Light-wafted with her step; soft Graces skim
Round all her form, and float from every limb:
Three Graces live in legendary lies:
A thousand spring from Hero's laughing eyes.

Duly, to her fair Venus' priesthood fell,
Whose charms could thus her charming sex excel;
She wore the priestess' lowly garb in vain,
Who was herself the Venus of the fane.
Each youth of tender soul infected sigh'd,
Nor one but wish'd to clasp her for his bride.
As o'er the temple's marble floor she moved;
Men's eyes, hearts, souls, with all her motions roved;
And one among the circling youths exclaim'd:
"Sparta I saw, for strife of beauties famed;
But ne'er beheld so chaste so soft a maid;
Sure, Venus has some youthful Grace array'd.
My tired gaze aches, yet with unsated eye;
Let me but climb her bed and instant die:
No—not a God would I in Heaven become,
So gentle Hero were my bride at home.
But, if I may not steal her from thy shrine,
Oh Venus! make as fair a virgin mine!"
So spake a youth; and his companions round,
Mad with her charms, in secret chafed the wound.
Thou too, Leander! martyr of desire,
Didst view the noble maid with glance of fire;

But loth, in secret, passion's stings to prove,
And yield the mind a prey to wasting love;
Loth, while with flamy-breathing dart subdued,
To drag a life of sighing solitude
Without the beauteous maid. The torch of flame
Fierce on the heart from mingling eyebeams came:
For, keener than a rapid arrow's flight,
Does faultless beauty pierce the mortal sight:
The eye inflicts, the eye admits, the blow;
Soft glides the wound with poison thrilling slow,
And o'er the heart of man the soft contagions flow.
Amazement, boldness, trembling, shame, contest,
With struggling tumults, in Leander's breast:
His heart quick trembled, and his cheek blush'd flame;
Her charms amazed, and passion vanquish'd shame.
Shameless from love, some few soft steps he took,
Confronting stood, and fix'd the virgin's look;
Turning his sidelong eyes with luring wile,
By silent hints the damsel to beguile.
She, when his art she mark'd, in conscious grace
Smil'd to herself, and oft she veil'd her face;

Yet, stealthily, with secret beck, the maid
Twinkling her eyelids, every sign repaid:
With rapture flush'd, the gazing youth believed
His signal answer'd, and his suit received;
And long'd for hidden hours. In western bay
Now glimmering sank the light-contracted day:
Full opposite, on evening's shadowy verge,
Bright Hesper's star appear'd above the surge.
When, as he saw the blackness-gathering shade,
Embolden'd, touch'd he close the lonely maid:
Her rose-tip'd fingers in soft silence press'd,
And drew a sigh long-breathing from his breast.
She silently, while veil'd in gloom they stand,
Draws as in anger back her roseate hand;
But when Leander felt the maid he loved
With sudden starts and wavering gestures moved,
He boldly twitch'd her robe of various hue,
And towards the sanctuary compulsive drew.
With tardy feet, as loth, the virgin went,
And female words were ready to resent:
"What madness moves thee, stranger? wretch! forbear
To drag a virgin, nor my vesture tear:

Begone, and dread my wealthy parents' ire;
For Venus' priestess ill beseems desire;
And hard the passage to a virgin's bed:"
So threaten'd she; what virgins say she said.
No female threats could make his ears afraid:
He knew the signs of a consenting maid.
Youths read in woman's frowns a smiling doom,
And threats are harbingers of joys to come.
Her fragrant rose-complexion'd neck he press'd
With clinging lips, love thrilling in his breast;
Then whisper'd: "Oh! thou wonder of this earth!
I liken thee to none of mortal birth,
But to the daughters of Saturnian Jove;
Thou second Pallas! second queen of love!
Blest, that begot thee; blest, the womb that bare;
Pity my love, and listen to my prayer.
Priestess of Venus, Venus' rites employ:
Oh come! initiated in nuptial joy!
Can ministering virgins Venus please?
Or smiles the queen of love on priests like these?
If Venus' laws august within thee burn,
Would'st thou her faithful orgies, reverent, learn;

Love's couch is nigh: does Venus charm thee? prove
The honied rites of soul-dissolving love.
Make me thy slave, or bid me share thy heart,
Chased as I am for thee by Cupid's dart.
As Hermes of the golden rod compell'd
Bold Hercules, in amorous thraldom held
By that fair Lydian Queen: not Hermes me,
But Venus' self, commissions now to thee.
Hast thou of that Arcadian virgin read?
How Atalanta shunn'd Milanion's bed?
A maiden vow'd? but angry Venus tore
Her heart with love, for him she scorn'd before.
Then be persuaded, sweet! and fear to prove
Th' indignant anger of the queen of love."
He said; and, softening, moved the wayward maid:
His words sow'd love: her thoughts bewilder'd stray'd.
Speechless the virgin stood, with downcast eye,
And veil'd her cheek that glow'd with modesty.
With tip-toe step she lightly paced the ground;
And bashful clip'd her folded mantle round.
Signs of soft yielding: by such acts betray'd
Of speaking silence, melts the coming maid.

Already, does her thrilling bosom prove
The bitter-sweet, voluptuous, stings of love.
Round Hero's heart the flame delicious plays:
She views Leander with entranced gaze:
Then on the ground she bends her fringed eyes;
His look dilates in frenzied ecstasies:
Still on her smooth-complexion'd neck, that turns
With sweeping bend, his glance insatiate burns:
Till Hero thus with softest accent said
(The flowing blush had bathed her cheek with red:)
"Stranger! thy words perchance would soften stone;
Whence were these ways of soft delusion known?
Who to my country led thee o'er the main?
Ah me!—but all thou say'st is said in vain:
How should an unknown wanderer share my love?
Never my parents would the ties approve,
If, loitering in the land, thou still remain,
To shroud our loves with darkness were in vain:
The tongues of men are busy to defame,
And crowded streets the secret deed proclaim;
But tell—conceal them not—thy country and thy
name.

Mine is not hid from thee; on rumour flown,
The name of Hero is not quite unknown.
A lofty tower my mansion; where around
Roars the deep ocean with eternal sound;
The spiry walls of Sestos rise behind;
There, by my parents' stern device confined,
I, with a single damsel, lonely dwell,
Where rolls the neighbouring sea with billowy swell
On the steep shore: no friends my hours engage,
No youthful playmates of congenial age:
In waking daylight, or in nightly sleep,
My ears are fill'd with winds, and voices of the deep."

She said, and veil'd again her rosy cheek,
And blamed herself for what she dared to speak.

Goaded with keen desires, Leander sought
The sweet encounter with contriving thought:
Love, fruitful in device, is ever found
To pierce the lover, but to heal the wound.
Love conquers all, but whom he conquers, aids;
His counsel thus Leander's breast pervades:
As, sighing from his inmost soul, he spake
Words of close wiles: "Oh virgin! for thy sake

Will I the wild waves cross, though sulph'rous gleam
With mingled fire th' unnavigable stream.
Not the drear surge can shake my soul with dread,
Nor roaring seas that waft me to thy bed;
While to thy arms, on Hellespontine tides,
Thy nightly husband of the waters rides.
For in a city near thy own I dwell:
Abydos fronts thy Sestian citadel.
But let a torch, from that high tower display'd,
Shine opposite athwart the midnight shade:
The light discern'd shall guide me straight before
To the sweet haven of thy country's shore;
Myself the ship of Love, I'll hail from far
The torch of Hero, my directing star;
Nor from the waters with uplifted eyes
Explore the constellations of the skies.
But, dear-one! watch, lest blasts should quench the fire,
My gleaming guide of life, and darkling I expire.
Know, that Leander is the name I bear;
The spouse of Hero with the flower-wreath'd hair."
So, secret-wedded, they ordain the night,
The stealthy joy, the harbingering light;

By whose sole witness they the compact keep,
To rear the torch, to swim the widening deep.
Thus fix'd their night-long wedlock's wakeful hour,
They part reluctant: Hero sought her tower;
The youth pass'd darkling forth; but, lest he stray,
Noted whence high should blaze the signal ray:
He swimming through th' unfathomable main,
In populous Abydos rose again.

Oft long'd they for the night, whose gloom should grace
Their secret couch, and struggling soft embrace:
Night came, and cowl'd in sable mantle ran,
And shook deep slumber o'er the eyes of man.
All but Leander's: he long-tarrying stood,
Where the shores echoed to the roaring flood;
And look'd, impatient till the angel sign
Of his bright wedlock should, discover'd, shine:
And that sad torch its glaring signal shed,
The far-seen herald of the secret bed.
But when with wary eyes th' expectant maid
The rayless gloom of gathering night survey'd,
She show'd the torch on high; Leander gazed:
As the torch kindled, so his passion blazed;

Hastening he rush'd; but, lingering on the shore,
The maddening waves with hoarse reechoing roar
Burst on his ear: he shudder'd as they roll'd,
Then, in high courage, thus his heart consoled:
"Dreadful is Love: ungentle is the sea;
Mere waters these; a burning fire is he;
Burn high my heart: the flowing surges brave;
Love calls thee on; then wherefore heed the wave?
Know'st thou that Venus from the deeps arose,
And rules the seas, and rules thy amorous woes?"
His beauteous limbs disrobing, while he said,
He roll'd his folded vestments round his head;
Sprang from the shore at one adventurous leap,
And cast his body midst the rolling deep.
Strait towards the gleaming torch he clave the sea;
The ship, the rower, and the helmsman he.
Th' enlightening damsel, on the turret high,
While with dread gust the winds of night swept by,
Screen'd with her robe the flame: till now, nigh spent,
Leander climb'd the harbouring shore's ascent.
She on the threshold met, and silent round
Her panting spouse her arms embracing wound.

Foam drizzling from his locks, within the tower
She led him to her secret virgin bower,
Deck'd for a bride: with smoothing hand she skims
The clinging brine-drops from his trickling limbs;
With rosy-fragrant oils his body laves,
And drowns in sweets the briny-breathing waves:
On high-heap'd couch, then, breathless as he lies,
Entwines around him, and enamour'd cries:
"My husband! thou hast suffer'd much, and more
Than ever bridegroom for his bride before:
My husband! great thy sufferings; the salt brine
Of bitter odour has enough been thine,
And roarings of the sea: take now thy rest,
And dry thy reeking toils upon my breast."
Swift at the word he loosed her virgin zone,
And Venus' rites and mutual joys were known.
Here wedlock revell'd; but no choral throng
Press'd round the door and raised the marriage song:
No poet call'd on coupling Juno's name,
No torches gilt the chamber with their flame.
No dancers blithe in bounding circle sprang;
No sire, no mother hymeneals sang;

But o'er the consummation of their love
The veiling curtain shadowy silence wove;
And dress'd the bed: still gloom array'd the bride;
Nuptials were hers, the nuptial song denied;
Night e'er the scene adorning darkness shed;
Nor e'er the morning in the well-known bed
Beheld the spouse Leander: he again
To opposite Abydos cross'd the main;
With oaring arms the severing billows drove,
And, still with bliss unsated, breathed of love.
While Hero did her parents' eyes evade,
In bashful robe of trailing length array'd;
By night a woman, and a maid by day;
And both still languish'd for the westering ray.
So they their strong impelling love conceal'd,
And mutual joy'd in raptures unreveal'd.
But long they lived not, soon their bliss was o'er;
And marriage-rite, that roam'd from shore to shore.
For when the winter, with its icy sweep,
In roaring storm upturn'd the whirlpool deep,
Strong blew the chilling hurricanes around,
Lash'd the broad sea, and heaved the gulfs profound.

The sailor dreads the winter ocean's roar,
And runs his bulging bark upon the creeky shore:
But thee, Leander! strong of heart! the main,
With all its horrors, would deter in vain.
The herald of the turret greets thy sight
With the known signal of the nuptial light:
Its rays, relentless and perfidious, urge
Thy fearless breast to stem the maddening surge.
Oh! had but Hero, while the winter reign'd,
From love a solitary bride abstain'd!
Nor kindled more the torch whose star must shed
So fleet a splendour o'er the marriage bed!
But urged by Fate and Love, she held from high
The torch, of love so late, but now of destiny.
'Twas night; when wintry blasts thick-gathering roar,
In darted whirlwind rushing on the shore:
Leander, hopeful of his wonted bride,
Was borne aloft upon the sounding tide:
Wave roll'd on wave: in heaps the waters stood;
Sea clash'd with air; and, howling o'er the flood,
From every point the warring winds were driven
And the loud deeps dash'd roaring to the heaven.

Leander struggled with the whirlpool main,
And oft to sea-sprung Venus cried in vain,
And him, the godhead of the watery reign.
None succouring hasten'd to the lover's call,
Nor Love could conquer fate, though conquering all.
'Gainst his opposing breast, in rushing heaps,
Burst with swift shock th' accumulated deeps:
Stiff hung his nerveless feet: his hands, long spread
Restless amidst the waves, drop'd numbed and dead:
Sudden th' involuntary waters rush'd,
And down his gasping throat the brine-floods gush'd;
The bitter wind now quench'd the light above,
And so extinguish'd fled Leander's life and love.
But while he linger'd still, the watchful maid,
With terrors wavering, on the tower delay'd.
The morning came—no husband met her view:
O'er the wide seas her wandering sight she threw:
If haply, since the torch was quench'd in shade,
Her bridegroom o'er the waters, devious, stray'd.
When, at the turret's foot, her glance descried
His rock-torn corse cast upward by the tide;

She rent the broider'd robe her breast around,
And headlong from the tower she fell with rushing sound.
Thus on her lifeless husband Hero died,
Nor death's last anguish could their loves divide.

Coluthus.

COLUTHUS.

Sixth Century.

RAPE OF HELEN.

English Translators:

MARLOWE, SHERBURNE, MEEN, BELOE.

COLUTHUS has been usually considered as a native of Lycopolis in Ægypt, where the poem was discovered in the fifteenth century by Cardinal Bessarion; but the surname of Thebæus would imply that he was born at Ægyptian Thebes. He is supposed to have flourished under the emperor Anastasius.

It has been said that Coluthus lived when all

taste for good poetry was lost: yet this iron age produced a Quintus and a Musæus. The "Rape of Helen" is simple in its invention, and elegant and pathetic in its details. Coluthus was the author of several other works now lost: the principal of which was a poem entitled "Persics:" on the Persian invasion of Greece.

COLUTHUS.

THE RAPE OF HELEN.

Ye Xanthian nymphs! that on the river sands
Wreathe your loose hair, and twine your changing hands;
But oft, forsaking that paternal tide,
O'er Ida's mountain in your dances glide:
Come forth, emerging from the sounding wave,
Tell how a shepherd umpire judgment gave;
How from the mountains, o'er th' unwonted spray,
He pass'd, unknowing of the ocean way;
Whence rose the ship, fraught full with evil's train,
And how a herdsman shook the earth and main;
How sudden sprang the great contention's cause,
And thus a shepherd gave immortals laws.
Say what the suit, and whence that name so dear
Of the fair Greek first melted on his ear:
For ye look'd wondering on, from Xanthus led
To the bare lawn on Ida's clefted head.

Ye saw young Paris on his sheepfold seat,
While Venus' heart with joy of triumph beat.
When wide Hæmonia's high-top'd mountains rang,
As choral voices Peleus' spousals sang;
Then Ganimede obey'd the beck divine,
And pour'd to Jove the nectar-flowing wine:
The Gods in gratulation sought the bride
Of snowy arms to Amphitrite allied:
Jove from Olympus; Neptune from the sea;
Apollo from the mountain of the bee;
Leading the Muses' troop, that rush'd along,
Drawn by the sweet-voiced cadence of his song.
With him came Juno, sister-wife of Jove:
With her Harmonia's mother, queen of love,
Sought with no lingering step the Centaur's grove.
Persuasion too with deftly-wreathed hair,
Lifting the quiver of the Loves, was there;
Minerva doff'd the helmet from her head,
And graced the wedding, though averse to wed:
Nor Dian, Phœbus' sister, did disdain,
Wild as she was, to join the nuptial train.

Bacchus, the grape-wreath nodding as he step'd,
With his long golden locks the breezes swept;
And Mars, as when he stole to Vulcan's spouse,
With swordless hand, and with unhelmed brows,
Now laid aside his cuirass and his lance,
His iron features smiling in the dance.
But Discord was unhonour'd and unsought,
Escaping Chiron's care, and Peleus' thought:
And as a heifer, stung by Punic breeze,
From grassy meads to wild-wood thickets flees;
So Discord ranged, with sharpest envy gored,
And mused how best to mar the social board.
Oft from her garnish'd seat of stones she sprung,
And upright stood, then sate, in backward posture flung:
Nor grasp'd earth's bosom with her searching hand,
With aim to hurl a stone amidst their band:
For she the crashing thunder-stone would throw,
Or call the Titans from their chasm below,
To wrap in whirls of blasting flame the sky,
And shake the throne of Jove who reigns on high:
But that she fear'd, though thus distraught with ire,
Vulcan, the lord of steel, and quenchless fire:

Now she devised the clanking shields to beat,
Startling each God, forth leaping from his seat;
But fear'd the mail'd and buckler'd Mars, her thought
Now with deep stratagem within her wrought:
Her brooding memory on those apples roll'd
That in Hesperia's gardens bloom'd with gold.
She pluck'd a branch, the harbinger of woe;
Saw troubles from the burnish'd apple grow;
Sow'd wars and tumults with her tossing hand,
And cast the fruit amid the festive band.
Quick rose the Goddesses: the wife of Jove,
Proud-glorying in the Thunderer's wedded love,
Stood in mute rapture gazing on the spray,
And stoop'd to snatch the fruit, and bear away.
Venus opposed, as fairest-born of all,
And for her Cupids claim'd the bloomy ball.
Jove saw the wrestling Goddesses, and cried
To youthful Hermes, beckon'd to his side,
"Son! hast thou heard of Paris, him who tends
His flock where Xanthus' winding current bends
At Ida's foot? fair, ruddy to behold?
Go, place within his hands the fruit of gold.

Let him decide what Goddess fairest shows,
In her round visage, and her meeting brows;
And her, adjudged most famed in charm of face,
Her let the golden fruit of preference grace."
He spoke, and Hermes hasten'd to obey;
Usher'd the Goddesses, and led the way.
Each, as she went, improved her charming air,
And strove to look more elegantly fair.
Venus with artful grace in many a fold
Her veil's light drapery to the gales unroll'd:
With bodkin, scented from her fragrant hair,
She wound her tresses, parted here and there;
Braids of thin gold her locks entwisted bind,
And each crisp'd ringlet is with gold entwined.
Then looking on her Loves, "Come, children dear!
Embrace your nurse: the contest now is near.
This day my forehead's beauty must decide;
By my fair looks are my pretensions tried.
Oh how I tremble, lest the apple be
Given by the shepherd's hand, and not to me!
Juno the Graces nursed, Immortals say,
Second in empire, proud in scepter'd sway;

Minerva queen of wars Immortals call,
And I alone am helpless midst them all.
No regal sway is mine, no sword or spear;
But why thus sink in fond excess of fear?
Keen as the rapid spear, my cestus darts,
A honied poison into human hearts;
The Loves within its fettering fold are bound;
There lurks a sting within its silken round;
My cestus is my weapon and my bow,
And women well my goading frenzy know;
Oft die away in languishings of pain,
And oft from sweetest death revive again."

So following on his steps the Goddess said,
Whose finger-tips are tinged with rosy red:
The Cupids to their nursing-mother sprung,
At the soft call of her enchanting tongue,
Trip'd by her side, or light-supported clung.

Now Hermes climb'd mount Ida's topmost steep,
Where blooming Paris fed his father's sheep;
And at the mouths of fresh Anaurus' tide
Sever'd the herds and flocks from side to side.
A mountain-goat's shag'd skin, behind him flung,
Low as the middle-thigh loose-trailing hung:

His herdsman's oxen-goading staff now lay
Before his feet: in this his swain's array
He to his usual haunts went forth alone,
And breathed a reed of shrill and rustic tone:
Full oft his bulls and sheep unheeded stray'd,
As by the sheepfold side he sang and play'd;
And in the shepherd's mode, on hollow cane,
To Pan and Hermes, sweet drew out the lengthen'd strain.

No dogs then bay'd; the low of herds was still;
Alone the self-taught Echo answer'd shrill
With breezy voice, and rang from Ida's hill.
The bulls, recumbent on the summits green,
With doubled knee were ruminating seen.
He, as he sate and piped, where arborous spread
The thicket's high-leaved sprays, and screen'd his head,
Look'd up, and saw Heaven's messenger appear,
As yet far off, and rose in starting fear;
Shunning the look of Goddesses, he stop'd,
And midst the shrubs his reed sonorous drop'd:
The tune, yet unexhausted, faltering hung,
And the check'd breath was broken on his tongue.

Him thus dismay'd the Messenger address'd:
His form and air the present God confess'd:
" Now cast thy fears aside, thy flock forsake,
Thy seat as umpire of Celestials take;
Judge here the face thou fairest shalt behold,
And to the fairest give this fruit of gold."
He said, and Paris bent his soften'd gaze:
His tranquil eye o'er all their beauties strays;
Marks their clear eyes that beam with azure fire,
Their smooth-turn'd neck, their gold-inwrought attire,
The sandals on their slender ankles bound,
And even their foot's soft sole that treads the ground.
But ere the sentence, Pallas stood beside
The smiling youth, and press'd his hand, and cried:
" Come, son of Priam! leave the wife of Jove,
And scorn the soft queen of the bed of love:
Give praise to Pallas, who can nerve thy heart;
Since Troy's defender and a prince thou art:
Come, I will make thee a protecting name,
Shield of th' opprest, of city-saving fame:
Lest that Bellona with her wrathful frown
Wither thy stedfast soul, and bear thee down:

Consent, and I will teach thy arm to wield
The sword, thy mind the counsels of the field."
So from her depth of wisdom Pallas spoke;
When Juno, milky-arm'd, the silence broke:
" If thou to me the fruit of preference give,
O'er all our Asia thou supreme shalt live:
Account not battles: what are wars to kings?
Round strong and weak his grasp the monarch flings.
Of Pallas' votaries, know, they thrive not all;
Swift-fated oft, Bellona's slaves, they fall."
So she, that sits on highest throne of heaven,
Proffer'd dominion for the apple given.
Then Venus open'd her deep-bosom'd vest,
Nor blush'd; and full exposed her heaving breast;
Unclasp'd Love's silken zone, and to the gale
Bared all her neck, forgetful of a veil:
Smiled on the keeper of the fold, and cried,
" Take this, and lay the thoughts of war aside:
Take this my beauty, Paris! and disdain
An empty sceptre and an Asian reign.
I know not war: has Venus need of arms?
No—women's weapons are their dazzling charms:

For valour, thou a lovely bride shalt wed:
For empire, thou shalt climb fair Helen's bed;
And Sparta shall with envy see thy joy,
When Sparta's Helen is a bride in Troy."

Ere yet her speech was finished, he consign'd
To her soft hand the fruit of burnished rind;
And foam-born Venus grasp'd the graceful meed,
Of war, of evil war, the quickening seed:
She in her palm the golden fruit display'd,
And taunted Juno, and the manlike maid:
"Resign, ye Amazons! the field resign:
Beauty I loved, and beauty's prize is mine:
Mother of Mars! from thy parturient throes
They say the Graces' fair-hair'd groupe arose!
Have they abjured thee on this fateful day?
Not one assists; and is thy Mars away?
So furious with his spear! oh queen of shields!
Mother of flame! no aid thy Vulcan yields:
Though breathing blasts of fire, he lurks behind;
And such, Minerva!—are thy vaunts of wind!
Thou, whose strange birth no genial wedlock
With whose young life no mother's bosom glow'd;

But steel's obstetric edge disclosed a way,
And from a father's forehead brought to day.
Thus in a cloak of mail thy limbs are dress'd;
Thy thoughts are bent on war, and love detest!
In the soft unison of hearts unskill'd,
No tender sympathy thy soul has thrill'd:
Ah! dull Minerva! and of judgment blind!
The lovely sex are of a softer kind;
Nor, clad in harness of the glorious fight,
With those male-female limbs, distract the sight."
Thus Venus rallied with malicious joy,
And grasp'd the prize that should extirpate Troy:
Thus with her taunts she drove the rival queens,
Chafed with high anger, from those mountain scenes.
But Paris languish'd, wretched with his pains,
While love for her, he knew not, fired his veins:
He mused, and to the thickening woodland brought
Men whose skill'd hands mechanic labours wrought:
Author of evils there Phereclus stood,
And fell'd the broad oaks branching through the wood:
Humouring the frantic prince, he fashion'd wide,
With timber-cleaving brass, the galley's side:

Then Paris changed for ocean Ida's hill:
By her who decks the couch attended still:
To her upon the shore he altars raised,
Whose incense-flame propitiating blazed:
Then on the surface of her nurturing main
He launch'd, and plough'd the Hellespontine plain:
Yet signs of woes to come were seen to rise:
The dark-blue deep dash'd upwards to the skies,
Girdling with gloomy haze the starry bear;
Whence torrent rain burst through the cloudy air:
Loud beat the tossing sea with hollow roar,
As each firm rower plied the quivering oar;
Till, Troas left, they overshot the bay
Of Ismarus, whose mouth beside them lay.
Thrace its Pangæan mountains distant rear'd;
The husband-loving Phillis' tomb appear'd:
The shore she nine times traversed to and fro,
Wild-running in th' impatience of her woe;
Despairing that Demophoon o'er the main
Should, safe from Athens, turn his course again.
Hæmonia's wide-till'd fields before his eyes,
And cities of Achaia, sudden rise:

While Pthia, nurse of men, his vision meets,
And vast Mycenæ, branch'd in broaden'd streets:
Next Erimanthus' mount ascending spreads
Its sides of meadow, and its verdant heads;
And Menelaus' Sparta, rapture's theme
For beauteous women, crowns Eurotas' stream;
And, looking round, he saw Theraphnæ nigh
Beneath a wooded mountain shaded lie.
Not long the river-voyage thence; nor long
Dash'd their shrill oars the silent banks among;
And, in the bosom of the land, the crew
Their cables cast, their vessel shoreward drew.
He, in the river swoln with mountain snow,
Bathed all his limbs; then walk'd with footstep slow,
A firm and measur'd pace, lest dust bespread
His lovely feet, disturb'd with trampling tread,
Or the crisp'd ringlets, which his cap embraced,
With gusts be ruffled from his passing haste.
Now through the stranger-sheltering town his gaze
Mark'd the high structures swell, the temples blaze:
Here, while on every side his glances roll'd,
He saw their native Pallas stand in gold;

There Hyacinthus' statue rose, the boy
In whose young sports Apollo plac'd his joy:
Amyclæ's people fear'd the quoit's swift flight,
And sought to draw him from the breezy fight:
Nor Phœbus guess'd that Zephyr jealous view'd
His lovely pupil, and with spite pursued:
Earth sooth'd the weeping king: a flower upgrew,
Mark'd with the stripling's name, whom Zephyr slew.

But Paris, with his heavenly charms elate,
Now stood at Menelaus' palace-gate:
Not such was Semele's fair babe of love:
Forgive me, Bacchus! though the seed of Jove;
For Paris too was fair: a shining grace
Darted its rays from all his blooming face.
Then Helen's hand unlock'd her chamber door,
Free to the stranger from a foreign shore;
Sudden descended to the hall, and threw
From forth the flower-wreath'd gates a curious view.
She saw; she mused upon his form and face.
And led him to the mansion's inner space;
Placed on a silver new-framed seat on high,
And gazing fed her still-unsated eye:

Now, as her glances o'er his person rove,
She sees the chamber-tending stripling, Love:
But no—it is not Love, however fair;
The quiver full of arrows is not there.
Now in the lovely apples of his eyes
The king of gay desires, young Hymen, lies:
At length, in wondering ravishment of heart,
She murmur'd; "Tell me, stranger! whence thou art?
Thy lovely race, thy country, name: I see
The splendour of a monarch's branch in thee:
But vainly midst the Greeks I trace the line;
Not sandy Pylos, Neleus' soil, is thine;
For well Antilochus to me is known:
Thy looks the likeness of his house disown.
Nor from heroic Pthia thee I trace:
I know th' Æacidæ's renowned race:
Peleus and Telamon in fame enroll'd;
And mild Patroclus and Achilles bold."

So with clear voice the lady spake, and sigh'd
Enamour'd: he with honey'd words replied:
"Hast thou e'er heard of towers on Phrygia's shore,
By Neptune and Apollo rear'd of yore?

And hast thou heard of that rich monarch's reign,
Who draws from Saturn's son his ancient strain?
Thence by my birth a prince, to me the share
Of flocks has fallen, the pastoral household's care:
I, Lady! am the son of Ilium's king;
From Dardanus, who sprang from Jove, we spring:
Thus Gods obey'd Laomedon our sire,
Became the guests of men, and served for hire,
Immortals as they were; and rais'd the wall
Of this our native Ilium, ne'er to fall.
I too, oh Queen! to Goddesses gave law;
And made heaven's rival beauties sad withdraw;
When, with selecting praise, I named the grace
Of Venus' fine-shaped form and dazzling face.
She on my service a reward bestow'd;
And with sure pledge a lovely consort show'd.
They call her Helen, Venus' kin; for thee
Have I endured to pass the swelling sea:
Come, blend we love: at Venus' call I came;
Slight not my Venus, nor her servant shame.
More I omit to say: what cunning speech
To one so wise as thee shall wisdom teach?

Need Menelaus' feeble race be told?
Not such are women cast in Grecian mould;
Though of a softer frame, the Grecian fair
A manlike semblance in their features wear:
While in their turn the men of spurious brood,
Like Menelaus, change to womanhood."

She on the earth bends low her lovely eyes,
Mute; then confused and faltering slow replies:
" In sooth, oh stranger! I have long'd to see
That realm, the country which gave birth to thee;
And wonderous city built by Gods of old,
Where, at the rampart's foot, his fleecy fold
And hoof-cloven herds Apollo fed, while round
The mead breathed shrill his flagelet's sweet sound.
Bear me to Troy from Sparta: I obey
Thy Venus, and will follow thee away:
I fear not Menelaus, when he knows
That me thy Troy does in its walls inclose."
So spoke the nymph with fine-turn'd ankles graced,
And so the covenant of love embraced.

Night that with shadowy track pursues the sun,
The pause of rest when human toils are done,

Now lifts the gates of sleep with rising morn,
While dreams fast flitting through the valves are
borne.
The gate of horn shines clear the world around,
And heaven-sent visions from its hinge rebound:
The other with a dim opaqueness gleams,
Nurse of vain shadows and delusive dreams.
Then from her husband's stranger-sheltering home
He tempted Helen o'er the ocean foam:
She climb'd the banks of oars, and he with joy
Of Venus' pledge, exulting sail'd for Troy;
Swift o'er the waters with his prize he flew,
The dangerous freight which foemen should pursue.
Hermione sigh'd deep: fast tears she shed,
And on the winds her torn tiara spread;
While morning shone around, the damsels all
Without her chamber, gather'd at her call:
Then with shrill shriek, "Oh say, my maidens! where
My mother strays, and leaves me to despair?
But yesternight, the chamber door she closed
In drooping sleep, and on my bed reposed."

She said, and melted into tears: the rest,
Within the vestibule, around her press'd,
Mingling their sobs; yet, all they could, they strove
To soothe her groans with fond officious love.
"Dear child! o'erspent with sorrow, seek thy bed;
Thy mother soon her backward steps shall tread:
Touch'd by the tidings of her daughter's tears:
Nay—see, how sunk with grief thy cheek appears:
Thy youthful-sparkling eyes, that dimly flow,
Their freshness lose, and waste themselves in woe.
Perchance she roam'd abroad to woodland shades,
And join'd the pastime of the trooping maids:
And, gone astray, now prints the trodden flowers
Of meadows haunted by the blooming Hours:
There stands disconsolate, the path unknown,
Sits on the dewy grass, and sighs alone.
Or in her father's stream her limbs she laves,
And loiters by the green Eurotas' waves."
Dissolving into tears the virgin spoke,
While groans of anguish from her bosom broke:
"No—she has seen the mountain, and her gaze
Has traced the river in its winding maze;

And all the various paths, where'er they lead,
To the rose-garden, or the grassy mead.
Why, oh my women! seek ye to appease
My just lamentings with such words as these?
The winking stars droop dim from blush of day,
On rocks she slumbers, where by night she lay:
The stars ascending in their glory burn,
Nor homeward yet my mother's steps return.
Oh mother mine! what desert holds thee now?
Or what wild mountain's solitary brow?
The beasts have rent thee wilder'd in the grove;
Yet beasts couch trembliug to the seed of Jove.
Or hast thou fallen down headlong, and art dead
In the low dust beneath the mountain's head?
Thy breathless body left in oaken glade,
Where the small prjnts of wandering flocks have
stray'd?
Yet have I track'd the branchy forest ways;
No tree, no leaf, has scaped my searching gaze:
Not in the woody brakes thy body lies;
Not 'gainst the forest should my anger rise;
Nor, where his budding banks Eurotas laves,
Thy limbs float hidden in the quiet waves:

For in the depths of sea, or river-flood,
Dwell bloodless nymphs, to women mild and good."
So wail'd the virgin; then, with neck reclined,
She slept, in very weariness of mind.
Sleep, death's companion, still our fainting souls
Alike with strong necessity controuls:
Still of his elder twin the step pursues,
And still, like death, th' afflicted spirit woos.
Thence women, when with heavy tears they steep
Their drooping eyelids, languish into sleep.
Then, by the working power of dreams, she strays,
And thinks her mother present to her gaze.
Amazement from her lips extorts a cry,
Though languid with o'erwearying misery.
"Mother! ere yesterday's faint morning light
Forth from our home thou took'st thy sudden flight:
Thou left'st me, mother! thus my tears to shed,
While fearless slumbering on my father's bed.
What dales I left behind! what mountains traced!
Did fair-hair'd Venus prompt thy eager haste?"
"My sad and suffering child! forbear thy blame:
For yestermorn a treacherous stranger came,

And ravish'd me away: " the phantom said;
The virgin started from her lowly bed;
Look'd for her nurse in vain, and fill'd the air
With shriller outcry: " Birds! the tidings bear
Upon your wings to Crete! and, as ye fly,
Bid Menelaus wake to infamy!
For yestermorn a man unrighteous came,
And quench'd his house in darkness and in shame! "

So wept the maid, and call'd on empty air;
And wandering sought her mother in despair.

Now Paris, passing Thracia in his flight,
Sees Hebrus' towers receding from his sight;
O'er Helle's strait his rapid gallies ride;
To Dardan port the bridegroom wafts the bride!
Cassandra, gazing from a turret high,
Sees the fair stranger-guest approaching nigh:
Tears her loose tresses, that dishevell'd flow,
And rends the golden fillet from her brow:
But high-roof'd Troy throws wide the gates, that close
On her returning son, the author of her woes.

Tryphiodorus.

TRYPHIODORUS.

Sixth Century.

THE SACK OF TROY.

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR: MERRICK.

OF Tryphiodorus nothing is certainly known, but that he was an Ægyptian. Some have regarded him as more ancient than Virgil. If their reasoning be founded on the passage in his poem, which represents the Gods assisting in the destruction of Troy, surely Virgil might equally have been the archetype of Tryphiodorus. The more probable conjecture places him at the beginning of the sixth century. His name is accompanied by the

honorary distinction of Grammarian, or professor of letters: a term which did not anciently imply a mere teacher of philology: Grammarians and Literati were synonimous distinctions.

A prepossession unfavourable to Tryphiodorus has been created by the elegant humour of Addison, while descanting on the different species of false wit. "The first I shall produce, he observes, are the Lipogrammatists, or letter-droppers of antiquity, that would take an exception without any reason against some particular letter in the alphabet, so as not to admit it once in a whole poem. One Tryphiodorus was a great master in this kind of writing. He composed an Odyssey, or epic poem on the adventures of Ulysses, consisting of four and twenty books, having entirely banished the letter A from his first book, which was called Alpha; as *lucus à non lucendo*, because there was not an alpha in it. His second book was inscribed Beta, for the same reason: in short, the poet excluded the whole four and twenty letters in their turns, and showed them that he could do his business without them. It must have been very plea-

sant to have seen this poet avoiding the reprobate letter as much as another would a false quantity, and making his escape from it through the different Greek dialects, when he was presented with it in any particular syllable. For the most apt and elegant word in the whole language was rejected, like a diamond with a flaw in it, if it appeared blemished with the wrong letter. I shall only observe upon this head that, if the work I have here mentioned had been now extant, the Odyssey of Tryphiodorus in all probability would have been oftener quoted by our learned pedants than the Odyssey of Homer. What a perpetual fund would it have been of obsolete words and phrases, unusual barbarisms and rusticities, absurd spellings, and complicated dialects! I make no question but it would have been looked upon as one of the most valuable treasures of the Greek tongue." Spect. No. 59.

In No. 63. Addison has again introduced him in his vision of the region of false wit, where he sees the phantom of Tryphiodorus pursued through

the intricacies of a dance by four and twenty persons, who are unable to overtake him.

Addison should however have mentioned, that Tryphiodorus is kept in countenance by no less an authority than Pindar, who, according to Athenæus, wrote an ode from which the letter *sigma* was carefully excluded.

This caprice of Tryphiodorus has not been without its imitators. Peter de Riga, a canon of Rheims, wrote a summary of the bible in three and twenty sections, and throughout each section ommitted successively some particular letter.

Gordianus Fulgentius, who wrote "De Ætatibus Mundi et Hominis," has styled his book "a wonderful work," chiefly, I suppose, from a similar reason: as from the chapter on Adam he has excluded the letter A; from that on Abel, the B; from that on Cain, the C; and so of the rest. This alphabetical whim has assumed various shapes: it has sometimes taken the form of a *fondness* for some particular letter: Petrus Placentius wrote a poem entitled, "Pugna Porcorum," in which

every verse began with P. The *Lipogrammatists* have been far outdone by the *Pangrammatists*, who contrive to crowd all the letters of the alphabet into every single verse. I doubt however whether their labours have extended beyond a limited number of lines. Ausonius is full of these fooleries.

In the instance of Tryphiodorus, the letter-dropping conceit appears to have been confined to the Ulyssiad. His Marathoniacs, an epic poem on the battle of Marathon, are lost; but the style of his "Sack of Troy" is elegant and noble, and evidently formed on the classic models. His descriptions are often extremely animated; and in his figures and conceptions he sometimes approaches to Homeric grandeur. His picture of the wooden horse may, at first sight, appear too highly laboured, and in too florid a taste; but the objection would only apply to it, if forming a digression in a larger poem, where it would be merely a subordinate instead of, as in this, a principal machine. What this horse really was has been the subject of much curious conjecture. The solution of Pliny seems to carry conviction. He

supposes it to have been a species of battering engine, which had then the head of a horse, as in after times it had that of a ram. The Greeks having, by means of this novel instrument of warfare, effected a practicable breach in the walls, rushed into the city and took it by storm.

Towards the conclusion of the poem, Homer and Virgil are almost literally transcribed in the supernatural passages. In the circumstances of slaughter Tryphiodorus resembles Quintus, though with inferior spirit and pathos. But even in Quintus, poetry is exhausted on a subject of unmixed disgust. The fancy sickens at the butchery of women and infants. "We have supped full with horrors."

TRYPHIODORUS.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE WOODEN HORSE.

EPEUS' crafty hand, by Pallas taught,
Troy's monstrous bane, a statue-courser wrought;
On Ida's hill the timber-trees he strow'd,
And to the plains convey'd the branchy load:
On Ida, where Phereclus' axe laid low
The trees for Paris' ship, the womb of woe.
He joins the well-rib'd belly to the side,
Of long and large dimensions, vast and wide:
Hollow'd like some keel'd ship of bottom deep;
Ruled by the square, and turn'd in rounding sweep.
On the smooth breast he fix'd the neck, and roll'd
The hair of purple tip'd with flaky gold:
Round the arch'd neck, bound fast with knotted chain,
Flows from the airy crest the wavy mane.
Stones in the sockets form'd the orbs of view;
The blood-red amethyst, and beryll blue.

A double tinge the rolling splendours shed;
The eyes of azure stone suffused with red.
His hands the teeth of sculptured silver fit
Within the jaws, to champ the bending bit;
And open leave the mouth, whose hollow way
Might yield the lurking men the breath of day.
Through the pierced vents the mounting vapours crowd;
The smoking nostrils roll a breathing cloud.
On the high head the pointed ears he hangs,
Erect to quiver, when the trumpet clangs:
Connects the back, and flank, and marrow'd spine;
While the smooth haunches with the loins combine.
Low to the feet the flowing tail descends,
As the curl'd vine its twisted tendrils bends.
Join'd to the pliant knees the shanks succeed,
And feet that, wing'd, seem starting into speed,
Though by their nature rooted to the ground:
The hard-hoof'd legs a brazen circle bound,
And shell of tortoise, bright with mottled stain,
Turn'd the round hoofs, that scarcely touch'd the plain.

A secret door he frames, a ladder hides
Close in the cavern'd statue's darkling sides;
That to the horse-famed Greeks a stair may lend,
And firm assist to mount or to descend.
Then round the cheeks and snowy neck he drew
The curbing reins of purple-blushing hue;
Head-trappings hung, that carved in ivory shine,
And brass, as silver white, from mountain-mine.
Now when the war-horse stood in form complete,
With spoke-rayed wheels he prop'd th' uplifted feet;
That so smooth-yielding it might track the field,
And swiftly drawn an easy passage yield.

Thus vast, thus towering high, the imaged wood,
Lightening in terror of its beauty, stood.
If that skill'd hand, with Nature's works at strife,
Could warm the statue with the blood of life,
E'en Mars, who reins a heavenly courser's speed,
Might joy to turn and wind the fiery steed.
Last with high fence he wall'd the sculptured pile,
Lest gazing Grecks should touch the blazon'd wile.

RECEPTION OF THE WOODEN HORSE INTO TROY.

THE Trojans bound with thongs and linked chains
The swift-wheel'd steed, that tower'd above the plains,
Freighted with Grecian chiefs: before the way,
Shrill harp, flute, voice, in chorus tune the lay.
Oh wretched race of senseless humankind!
In mental darkness of the future blind!
On empty joys ye turn your vacant eye,
And slide on dangers ere ye dream them nigh.
Thus deadly mischief on the Trojans lay,
As to the town they took their willing way;
And crop'd the flowers that grew in Simois' mead,
To braid the mane of the destroyer steed.
Crush'd by the brazen wheels, deep groan'd the ground;
The iron axles clank'd with ponderous sound:
Creak'd the wedged wood, while stretch'd the slow-drag'd chains;
The dust in whirls smoked blackening o'er the plains:

Mighty the shout and tramp of those who led
The statue steed, in mingled uproar spread:
Nymph-haunted Ida from its oaks replied,
Shrill Xanthus rang from silver-circled tide;
From Simois' mouth the echoed sounds were driven,
And Jove, with blast of war, blew hoarse his trump
from heaven.
Still on they drag'd the steed, though rough the way,
And cut with streams; nor smooth the champaign lay.
On to the martial shrine the courser sped,
And tower'd aloft, and arch'd his glorying head.
On his compacted ribs the blue-eyed maid,
With strong support, her hand impulsive laid:
Then, swifter than a spear, he rush'd along,
And quickening track'd the rolling Trojan throng;
But in the Dardan gates obstructed stood;
The narrowing angles press'd the straiten'd wood:
Till Juno smooth'd the passage: Neptune bent
From the high turret, and the threshold rent.
From every street the Trojan women throng,
Girls, maids betroth'd, and matrons haste along;
And, dancing in a ring, the courser greet
With shrilling songs, and rapid-whirling feet.

Some 'gainst the soiling rain, assiduous, threw
Their sheltering mantles of vermilion hue;
Some loosed the costly girdles from their breast,
And his arch'd neck with flowery fillets dress'd;
Another held a hollow flaggon's head
And wine, infused with golden saffron, shed:
Soft gush'd the wine in shower'd libation round,
And rill'd in odours on the trickling ground.
With manly voice the woman's treble blends,
Old men's weak cry with shouts of boys ascends.
As from th' abundant sea the stranger cranes,
Followers of winter, throng th' ethereal plains;
Wheel round like dancers vaulting in a ring,
And threat the sower's toil with clanging wing:
So with throng'd clamour drag'd they through the gate
The horse, deep-groaning with his ambush'd weight.
Nor chamber'd then remain'd the prescient maid,
Nor bars, nor doors, her rushing fury stay'd;
Led by the God: as fleet the heifer bounds,
Whom the keen wasp has thrill'd with barbed wounds;
Nor can the herd attract, the meads detain;
She leaps the pasture's bound, and scorns the swain;

So, stung with prophecy, the virgin flew,
With wildering heart, and ranged the city through.
Howling she shook the laurel branch on high,
Friends, parents scorn'd, and virgin modesty.
By pipe of mountain-maddening Bacchus drawn,
The Thracian maid so skims the forest lawn;
Smit by the God her rolling eyeballs glow,
Dark ivy nods on her dishevell'd brow:
Thus leaping forth, while frenzy lends her wings,
Sudden abroad the chafed Cassandra springs;
And oft she rends the tresses of her hair,
And smites with mangling stroke her bosom bare.
" Why lead ye thus, oh senseless men of Troy!
Oh mad of brain! the steed, your death-snare, and
decoy?
Soon, wretches! will your wars indeed be o'er,
In night, without a morn; in sleep, that wakes no
more!
The martial pageant is the gift of foes;
Lo! Hecuba's dark dreams, and boding throes!
Lo! the protracting year its circle bends,
The time is full, the lingering warfare ends!

The wile of Grecian princes is at hand;
Through gloomiest night an armour-gleaming band
Start from the courser's womb: an iron birth,
In battles bred, they touch the trampled earth.
No woman, hasting in the hour of need,
Shall ease the birth-pangs of that labouring steed:
But she who knit the frame assistant stand,
The mighty midwife, with portentous hand!
Yea—city-razing Pallas opes the womb
With a shrill shout, the sign of Ilium's doom.
It rolls within our walls, a purple flood,
A surge of slaughter, and a sea of blood.
I see the twisted manacles, that gall
Our women's wrists; one misery levels all.
Womb'd in the steed the slumbering embers glow;
Woe, woe is me! my native country, woe!
A heap of dust, Laomedon! thy wall;
The heaven-built towers heave tottering to their fall.
For thee, oh Priam! fatally secure;
Oh father! mother! what must ye endure!
Father! thy pitiable death is nigh;
Soon at Jove's altar, thou in blood shalt lie:

Mother of goodly sons! to thee has heaven
For these sons dead a dog's fierce frenzy given.
And thee, oh dear Polyxena! my eyes
In pity weep; thee, slain in sacrifice,
In thy loved country's sight: and would to me
That death might come when this has fallen on thee!
For what avails it that I draw my breath
Reserved for still more miserable death?
My grave a stranger's land? what mistress there
Shall lord it o'er me when, a monarch's share,
I take my captive lot; for warlike toil
When Agamemnon claims me as a spoil?
Hear, all ye Trojans! hear, reflect, and know;
Shake off the mist of madness and of woe:
Break with sharp axe the steed's capacious frame,
Or let it moulder in the burning flame:
Destroy its ambush-hiding cave with fire,
And heap the Greeks on one consuming pyre.
Then spread me banquets; then your dances ply;
And crown the cup in lovely liberty!"
So spake the maid: but wild her words appear;
By Phœbus' curse, a true but slighted seer.

Then with a stern rebuke her sire replied,
" Malicious dog-fly! that hast shame defied!
Who led thee hither? but thy cries are wind;
The airy dotage of a dreamy mind.
Art thou not weary of this drivelling strain,
Nor sated yet with frenzies of the brain?
Why troublest thou our feast? Jove bids arise
The day of freedom: Græcia's navy flies.
No spear is brandish'd, and no falchion rings;
No bow is bent; no feather'd arrow sings:
But dance, and music's honey-breathing voice,
As if in victory's hour, proclaim " rejoice!"
No mother mourns her son; nor weeps to part,
The wife, a widow in her boding heart.
Our guardian Pallas brings the courser's aid;
The maid herself, the war-enduring maid.
Yet, bursting from thy doors, thou yell'st the strain
Of lying useless prophecies in vain.
These through the festal city sadness spread,
And mar the feast: a mischief on thy head!
Dance, feast, and song!—For Troy no fear remains,
Nor need we longer thy prophetic strains."

He spoke, and at his word the train convey'd
Within her chamber the fond-seeming maid.
She, struggling in reluctance, round him clung,
And o'er her father slowly yielding hung.
Then, prostrate grovelling on her virgin bed,
O'er her known fate a burst of sorrow shed.
Revealed before her eyes the city falls,
And climbing flames enwrap the smouldering walls.
But to Minerva's fane the Trojans bore
The mighty steed, that press'd the solid floor.
From the rich altars wreathing smokes arise;
The Gods reject th' imperfect sacrifice.
Then feast the people: Riot lords it wide:
Riot, that reels in wine's unnerving tide.
The city lay in giddy revels drown'd;
Slender the watch the guardless gates around;
The sinking sun rolls down his westering light,
And o'er Troy's lofty towers Destruction broods in night.

FINIS.

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